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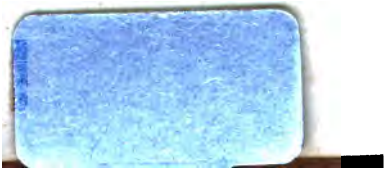

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THE EIGHT EDITION.

VOL. III.

PAISLEY:

Printed by A. WEIR and A. M'LEAN.

And sold at the Shop of A. WEIR, near the Cross.

MDCCLXX.

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THE METHOD OF GRACE.

* *

SERMON XXVIII.

GAL. v. 24. *And they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.*

From hence our observation was,

THAT a saving interest in Christ, may be regularly and strongly inferred and concluded, from the mortification of the flesh, with its affections and lusts.

Having opened the nature, and necessity of mortification in the former sermon, and shewn how regularly a saving interest in Christ may be concluded from it; we now proceed to apply the whole, by way of

1. Information.
2. Exhortation.
3. Direction.
4. Examination.
5. Consolation.

First use, for information.

Infer. 1. If they that be Christ's have crucified the flesh, *Then the life of Christians is no idle or easy life:* the corruptions of his heart continually fill his hands with work, with work of the most difficult nature; sin-crucifying work, which the scripture calls the cutting off the right hand, and plucking out of the right eye: sin-crucifying work is hard work, and it is constant work throughout the life of a Christian; there is no time nor place freed from this conflict; every occasion stirs corruption, and every stirring of corruption calls for mortification: corruptions work in our very best duties, Rom. vii. 23. and put the Christian upon mortifying labours. The world and the devil are great enemies, and fountains of many temptations to believers, but not like the corruptions of our own hearts; they only tempt objectively and externally; but these tempt internally, and therefore much more dangerous; they only tempt at times and seasons; these continually, at all times and seasons: besides, whatever Satan, or the world attempts upon us, would be altogether ineffectual were it not for our own corruptions, John xiv.

30. So that the corruptions of our own hearts, as they give us moſt danger, ſo they muſt give us more labour; our life and this labour muſt end together; for ſin is long a dying in the beſt heart: thoſe that have been many years exerciſed in the ſtudy of mortification, may haply feel the ſame corruption tempting and troubling them now, which put them into tears, and many times brought them to their knees twenty or forty years ago. It may be ſaid of ſin as it was of Hannibal, that active enemy; that it will never be quiet, whether conquering or conquered; and until ſin ceaſe working the Chriſtian muſt not ceaſe mortifying

Infer. 2. If mortification be the great work of a Chriſtian, *then certainly thoſe that give the corruptions of Chriſtians an occaſion to revive, muſt needs do them a very ill office:* they are not our beſt friends that ſtir the pride of our hearts by the flattery of their lips. The graces of God in others, I confeſs, are thankfully to be owned, and under diſcouragements, and contrary temptations, to be wiſely and modeſtly ſpoken of; but the ſtrongeſt Chriſtians do ſcarcely ſhew their own weakneſs in any one thing more than they do in bearing their own praiſes. Chriſtian, thou knoweſt thou carrieſt gunpowder about thee, deſire thoſe that carry fire to keep at a diſtance from thee; 'tis a dangerous *criſis* when a proud heart meets with flattering lips; *auferte ignem*, &c. take away the fire, (ſaid a holy divine of Germany, when his friend commended him upon his death-bed) for I have yet combuſtible matter about me; faithful, ſeaſonable, diſcreet reproofs are much more ſafe to us, and advantageous to our mortifying work; but alas, how few have the boldneſs or wiſdom duly to adminiſter them? It is ſaid of Alexander, that he bid a philoſopher (who had been long with him) to be gone; for, ſaid he, ſo long thou haſt been with me, and never reproved me; which muſt needs be thy fault; for either thou ſaweſt nothing in me worthy of reproof, which argues thy ignorance; or elſe, thou durſt not reprove me, which argues thy unfaithfulneſs. A wiſe and faithful reprover is of ſingular uſe to him that is heartily engaged in the deſign of mortification; ſuch a faithful friend, or ſome malicious enemy, muſt be helpful to us in that work.

Infer. 3. Hence it follows, *that manifold and ſucceſſive afflictions are no more than what is neceſſary for the beſt of Chriſtians;* the mortification of our luſts requires them all, be they never ſo many, 1 Pet. i. 5. "If need be, ye are in heavineſs;" it is no more than need, that one loſs ſhould follow another, to mortify an earthly heart; for ſo intenſely are our affections ſet upon the world, that it is not one, or two, or many checks of

providence, that will ſuffice to wean and alienate them. Alas, the earthlineſs of our hearts will take all this, it may be much more than this, to purge them: the wiſe God ſees it but neceſſary to permit frequent diſcoveries of our own weakneſs, and to let looſe the tongues of many enemies upon us, and all little enough to pull down our pride, and the vanity that is in our hearts: Chriſtian, how difficult ſoever it be for thee to bear it; yet the pride of thy heart requires all the ſcoffs and jeers, all the calumnies and reproaches, that ever the tongues or pens of thy bittereſt enemies, or miſtaken friends, have at any time thrown upon thee. Such rank weeds as grow in our hearts, will require hard froſts and very ſharp weather to rot them; the ſtraying bullock needs a heavy clog, and ſo doth a Chriſtian, whom God will keep within the bounds and limits of his commandments, Pſal. cxix. 67. Dan. xi. 35.

Infer. 4. If they that be Chriſt's have crucified the fleſh *, *Then the number of real Chriſtians is very ſmall.* It is true, if all that ſeem to be meek, humble, and heavenly, might paſs for Chriſtians, the number would be great; but if no more muſt be accounted Chriſtians, than thoſe who crucify the fleſh, with its affections and luſts, O how ſmall is the number! For, O how many be there under the Chriſtian name, that pamper and indulge their luſts, that ſecretly hate all that faithfully reprove them, and really affect none but ſuch as feed their luſts, by praiſing and admiring them? How many that make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil its luſts, who cannot endure to have their corruptions croſſed? How many are there that ſeem very meek and humble, until an occaſion be given them to ſtir up their paſſion, and then you ſhall ſee in what degree they are mortified: the flint is a cold ſtone, till it be ſtruck, and then it is all fiery. I know the beſt of Chriſtians are mortified but in part; and ſtrong corruptions are oftentimes found in very eminent Chriſtians; but they love them not ſo well as to purify for them; to protect, defend, and countenance them; nor dare they ſecretly hate ſuch as faithfully reprove them: as many thouſands that go under the name of Chriſtians do. Upon the account of mortification it is ſaid, Mat. vii. 13. "Narrow is "the way, and ſtrait is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few "there be that find it."

Infer. 5. If they that be Chriſt's have crucified the fleſh, *i. e.*

* He who is not crucified with Chriſt, and who is not a member of Chriſt, is not ſaved by his croſs. *Proſper.*

Mortification is their daily work and ſtudy; *then how falſely are Chriſtians charged as troublers of the world, and diſturbers of the civil peace, and tranquillity of the times, and places they live in?* Juſtly may they retort the charge, as Elijah did to Ahab, "It is not I that trouble Iſrael, but thou and thy father's houſe:" It is not the holy, meek, and humble Chriſtians that put the world into confuſion: this is done by the profane and atheiſtical; or by the deſigning and hypocritical world, and laid at the innocent Chriſtian's door; as all the public calamities which from the immediate hand of God, or by foreign, or domeſtic enemies befel Rome, were conſtantly charged upon Chriſtians; and they condemned and puniſhed, for what the righteous hand of God inflicted, on the working heads of the enemies of that ſtate, without their privity, contrived. The apoſtle James propounds, and anſwers a queſtion, very pertinent to this diſcourſe, James iv. 1. "From whence come wars and fightings among "you? Come they not hence, even of your luſts that war in "your members?" O if all men did but ſtudy mortification and ſelf-denial, and live as much at home in the conſtant work of their own hearts, as ſome men do; what tranquillity and peace, what bleſſed halcyon-days ſhould we quickly ſee! it is true, Chriſtians are always fighting and quarrelling, but it is with themſelves, and their own corrupt hearts and affections; they hate no enemy but ſin; they thirſt for the blood and ruin of none but of that enemy; they are ambitious of no victory, but what is over the corruptions of their own hearts; they carry no grudge except it be againſt this enemy, ſin: and yet theſe are the men who are the moſt ſuſpected and charged of diſturbing the times they live in; juſt as the wolf accuſed the lamb, which was below him, for puddling and defiling the ſtream. But there will be a day, when God will clear up the innocency and integrity of his miſtaken and abuſed ſervants; and the world ſhall ſee, it was not preaching, and praying, but drinking, ſwearing, profaneneſs, and enmity unto true godlineſs, which diſturbed and broke the tranquillity, and quietneſs of the times: mean time let innocency commit itſelf unto God, who will protect, and in due time vindicate the ſame.

Infer. 6. If they that be Chriſt's have crucified the fleſh, *Then whatſoever religion, opinion, or doctrine doth in its own nature countenance and encourage ſin, is not of Chriſt.* The doctrine of Chriſt every where teacheth mortification: the whole ſtream of the goſpel runs againſt ſin; the doctrine it teacheth is holy, pure and heavenly, it hath no tendency to extol corrupt nature, and feed its pride, by magnifying its freedom and pow-

er, or by ſtamping the merit and dignity of the blood of Chriſt upon its works and performances; it never makes the death of Chriſt a *cloke* to cover ſin, but an *inſtrument* to deſtroy it. And whatſoever doctrine it is which nouriſhes the pride of nature, to the diſparagement of grace, or encourages licentiouſneſs and fleſhly luſt, is not the doctrine of Chriſt, but a ſpurious off-ſpring begotten by Satan upon the corrupt nature of man.

Inter. 7. If mortification be the great buſineſs and character of a Chriſtian, *Then that condition is moſt eligible and deſireable by Chriſtians, which is leaſt of all expoſed to temptation,* Prov. xxx. 8. "Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed "me with food convenient." That holy judicious man was well aware of the danger lurking in both extremes, and how near they border upon deadly temptations, and approach the very precipiece of ruin, that ſtand upon either ground: few Chriſtians have any head ſtrong and ſteady enough to ſtand upon the pinacle of wealth and honour; nor is it every one that can grapple with poverty and contempt. A mediocrity is the Chriſtians beſt external ſecurity, and therefore moſt deſirable: and and yet how do the corruption, the pride and ignorance of our hearts graſp and covet that condition which only ſerves to warm and nouriſh our luſts, and make the work of mortification much more difficult? 'Tis well for us, that our wiſe Father leaves us not to our own choice, that he frequently daſhes our earthly projects, and diſappoints our fond expectations. If children were left to carve for themſelves, how often would they cut their own fingers?

Infer. 8. If mortification be the great buſineſs of a Chriſtian, *then Chriſtian fellowſhip, and ſociety duly managed, and improved, muſt needs be of ſingular uſe, and ſpecial advantage to the people of God.* For thereby we have the friendly help and aſſiſtance of many other hands, to carry on our great deſign, and help us in our moſt difficult buſineſs; if corruption be too hard for us, others, this way, come in to our aſſiſtance, Gal. vi. 1. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are ſpi-"ritual reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſs." If temptations prevail, and overbear us that we fall under ſin, it is a ſpecial mercy to have the reproofs, and counſels of our brethren, who will not ſuffer ſin to reſt upon us, Levit. xix. 17. Whilſt we are ſluggiſh and ſleepy, others are vigilant, and careful for our ſafety: The humility of another, reproves and mortifies my pride: The activity, and livelineſs of another, awakens and quickens my deadneſs: The prudence, and gravity of another, detects and cures my levity and vanity: The heavenlineſs, and

ſpirituality of another, may be exceeding uſeful, both to reprove, and heal the earthlineſs, and ſenſuality of my heart. Two are better than one, but wo unto him that is alone. The devil is well aware of this great advantage, and therefore ſtrikes with ſpecial malice againſt embodied Chriſtians, who are as a well diſciplined army, whom he therefore more eſpecially endeavours to rout, and ſcatter by perſecutions, that thereby particular Chriſtians may be deprived of the ſweet advantages of mutual ſociety.

Infer. 9. *How deeply hath ſin fixed its roots, in our corrupt nature, that it ſhould be the conſtant work of a Chriſtian's whole life, to mortify and deſtroy it?* God hath given us many excellent helps, his Spirit within us, variety of ordinances and duties are alſo appointed as inſtruments of mortification: And from the very day of regeneration unto the laſt moment of diſſolution, the Chriſtian is daily at work, in the uſe of all ſanctified means, external and internal, yet can never dig up, and deſtroy corruption at the root all his life long. The moſt eminent Chriſtians, of longeſt ſtanding in religion, who have ſhed millions of tears for ſin, and poured out many thouſand prayers for the mortification of it, do, after all, find the remains of their old diſeaſe, that there is ſtill life, and ſtrength in thoſe corruptions which they have given ſo many wounds unto in duty. O the depth, and ſtrength of ſin! which nothing can ſeparate from us, but that which ſeparates our ſouls and bodies. And upon that account, the day of a believer's death, is better than the day of his birth. Never till then, do we put off our armour, ſheath our ſword, and cry victory, victory.

Second uſe, for exhortation.

If they that are Chriſt's have crucified the fleſh, *&c.* Then as ever we hope to make good our claim to Chriſt, let us give all diligence to mortify ſin, in vain elſe are all our pretences unto union with him. This is the great work, and diſcriminating character of a believer. And ſeeing it is the main buſineſs of life, and great evidence for heaven, I ſhall therefore preſs you to it by the following motives and conſiderations.

1 *Motive.* And firſt, methinks the comfort, and ſweetneſs, reſulting from mortification, ſhould effectually perſuade every believer to more diligence about it. There is a double ſweetneſs in mortification, one in the nature of the work, as it is a duty, a ſweet chriſtian duty; another as it hath reſpect to Chriſt, and is evidential of our union with him. In the firſt conſideration there is a wonderful ſweetneſs in mortification, for doſt thou not feel a bleſſed calmneſs, chearineſs, and tranquillity in thy con-

ſcience, when thou haſt faithfully repelled temptations, ſucceſsfully reſiſted and overcome thy corruptions? Doth not God ſmile upon thee; conſcience encourage, and approve thee? Haſt thou not an heaven within thee? whilſt others feel a kind of hell in the deadly gripes, and bitter accuſations of their own conſciences: are covered with ſhame, and filled with horrors. But then, conſider it alſo as an evidence of the ſoul's intereſt in Chriſt, as my text conſiders it; and what an heaven upon earth muſt then be found in mortification! Theſe endeavours of mine to ſubdue and mortify my corruptions, plainly ſpeak the Spirit of God in me, and my being in Chriſt; and O what is this! What heart hath largeneſs, and ſtrength enough to receive and contain the joy, and comfort which flow from a cleared intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt! Certainly, Chriſtians, the tranquillity, and comfort of your whole life depends upon it: and what is life without the comfort of life? Rom. viii. 13. "If ye through the Spirit do "mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live," (*i. e.*) you ſhall live a ſerene, placid, comfortable life; for it is corruption unmortified which clouds the face of God, and breaks the peace of his people, and conſequently imbitters the life a Chriſtian.

2. *Motive.* As the comfort of your own lives, which is much, ſo your inſtrumental fitneſs for the ſervice of God, which is much more, depends upon the mortification of your ſins, 2 Tim. ii. 21. "If a man therefore purge himſelf from theſe, he ſhall be "a veſſel unto honour; ſanctified and meet for the Maſter's "uſe, and prepared unto every good work." Where is the mercy of life, but in the uſefulneſs and ſerviceableneſs of it unto God? It is not worth while to live ſixty, or ſeventy years in the world, to eat and drink, to buy and ſell, to laugh and cry, and then go down to the place of ſilence. So far as any man lives to God, an uſeful, ſerviceable life to his praiſe and honour; ſo far only, and no farther doth he anſwer the end of his being. But it is the purged, mortified ſoul which is the veſſel of honour, prepared, and meet for the Maſter's uſe. Let a proud, or an earthly heart be employed in any ſervice for God, and you ſhall find that ſuch an heart will both ſpoil the work, by managing it for a ſelf-end as Jehu did; and then devour the praiſe of it by a proud boaſt: *Come ſee my zeal.* When the Lord would employ the prophet Iſaiah in his work and ſervice, his inlquity was firſt purged; and after that he was employed, Iſa. vi. 6, 7, 8. Sin is the ſoul's ſickneſs, a conſumption upon the inner man; and we know that languiſhing conſumptive perſons are very unfit to be employ'd in difficult and ſtrenuous labours: Mortification, ſo far as it prevails, cures the diſeaſe, recovers our

ſtrength, and enables us for ſervice to God in our generations.

3. *Motive.* Your ſtability, and ſafety in the hour of temptation, depends upon the ſucceſs of your mortifying endeavours. Is it then a valuable mercy in your eyes to be kept upright, and ſtedfaſt in the critical ſeaſon of temptation, when Satan ſhall be wreſtling with you for the crown, and prize of eternal life! Then give diligence to mortify your corruptions. Temptation is a ſiege, Satan is the enemy without the walls, labouring to force an entrance; natural corruptions are the traitors within, that hold correſpondence with the enemy without, and open the gate of the ſoul to receive him. It was the covetouſneſs of Judas his heart which overthrew him in the hour of temptation. They are our fleſhly luſts which go over unto Satan in the day of battle, and *fight againſt our ſouls*, 1 Pet. ii. 11. the corruptions (or infectious atoms which fly up and down the world in times of temptation, as that word μιασματα, 2 Pet. ii. 20. imports) are through luſts, 2 Pet. i. 4. It is the luſt within, which gives a luſtre to the vanities of the world without, and thereby makes them ſtrong temptations to us, 1 John ii. 16. Mortify therefore your corruptions, as ever you expect to maintain your ſtation in the day of trial: cut off thoſe advantages of your enemy, leſt by them he cut off your ſouls, and all your hopes from God.

4. *Motive.* As temptations will be irreſiſtable, ſo afflictions will be unſupportable to you without mortification. My friends, you live in a mutable world, providence daily rings the changes, in all the kingdoms, cities, and towns, all the world over. You that have huſbands or wives to day, may be left deſolate to-morrow: You that have eſtates, and children now, may be bereaved of both before you are aware. Sickneſs will tread upon the heel of health, and death will aſſuredly follow life, as the night doth the day. Conſider with yourſelves, are you able to bear the loſs of your ſweet enjoyments with patience? Can you think upon the parting hour without ſome tremblings? O get a heart mortified to all theſe things, and you will bleſs a taking, as well as a giving God. It is the living world, not the crucified world, that raiſes ſuch tumults in our ſouls in the day of affliction. How chearful was holy Paul under all his ſufferings! and what think you gave him that peace and chearfulneſs, but his mortification to the world? Phil. iv. 12. "I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how "to abound; every where, and in all things I am inſtructed, "both to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound, and ſuf-"fer need." Job was the mirror of patience, in the greateſt

ſhock of calamity, and what made him ſo, but the mortifiedneſs of his heart, in the fulleſt enjoyment of all earthly things? Job xxxi. 25.

5. *Motive.* The reputation, and honour of religion, is deeply concerned in the mortification of the profeſſors of it: For unmortified profeſſors will, firſt or laſt, be the ſcandals, and reproaches of it. The profeſſion of religion may give credit to you, but to be ſure you will never bring credit to it. All the ſcandals, and reproaches that fall upon the name of Chriſt in this world, flow from the fountain of unmortified corruption. Judas and Demas, Hymeneus and Philetus, Ananias and Saphira ruined themſelves, and became rocks of offence to others, by this means. If ever you will keep religion ſweet, labour to keep your hearts mortified and pure.

6. *Motive.* To conclude, what hard work will you have in your dying hour, except you get a heart mortified to this world, and all that is in it? Your parting hour is like to be a dreadful hour, without the help of mortification. Your corruptions, like glew, faſten your affections to the world, and how hard will it be for ſuch a man to be ſeparated by death? O what a bitter, and doleful parting have carnal hearts from carnal things! whereas the mortified ſoul can receive the meſſengers of death without trouble, and as chearfully put off the body at death, as a man doth his cloaths at night: Death need not pull and hale; ſuch a man goes half way to meet it, Phil. i. 23. "I deſire to "be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better." Chriſtian, wouldſt thou have thy death-bed ſoft and eaſy; wouldſt thou have an εὐθανασία, as the *philoſopher* deſired for himſelf, an eaſy death, without pain or terror; then get a mortified heart: the *chirurgeon's* knife is ſcarce felt, when it cuts off a mortified member.

Third uſe, for direction.

Are you convinced, and fully ſatisfied of the excellency and neceſſity of mortification, and inquiſitive after the means, in the uſe whereof, it may be attained? then, for your help and encouragement, I will, in the next place, offer my beſt aſſiſtance, in laying down the rules for this work.

Rule 1. If ever you will ſucceed, and proſper in the work of mortification, then get, and daily exerciſe more faith. Faith is the great inſtrument of mortification: "This is the victory, (or "ſword by which the victory is won, the inſtrument) by which "you overcome the world, even your faith," 1 John v. 4. By faith alone eternal things are diſcovered to your ſouls, in

their reality and excelling glory, and these are the preponderating things, for the sake whereof, self-denial and mortification becomes easy to believers; by opposing things eternal to things temporal, we resist Satan, 1 Pet. v. 8. This is the shield by which we quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, Eph. vi. 16.

Rule 2. Walk in daily communion with God, if ever you will mortify the corruptions of nature; that is the apostle's own prescription, Gal. i. 16. "This I say then, walk in the Spirit, "and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." Spiritual and frequent communion with God, gives manifold advantages for the mortification of sin: as it is a bright glass wherein the holiness of God, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin, as it is opposite thereunto, are most clearly and sensibly discovered, than which, scarce any thing can set a keener edge of indignation upon the spirit of a man against sin. Besides, all communion with God is assimilating, and transformative of the soul into his image; it leaves also a heavenly relish and savour upon the soul; it darkens the lustre and glory of all earthly things, by presenting to the soul a glory which excelleth: it marvellously improves, and more deeply radicates sanctification in the soul; by all which means it becomes singularly useful and successful in the work of mortification.

Rule 3. Keep your consciences under the awe and in the fear of God continually, as ever you hope to be successful in the mortification of sin. The fear of God is the great preservative from sin, without which all the external rules and helps in the world signify nothing: "By the fear of the Lord, men depart from "evil," Prov. xvi. 6. Not only from external and more open evils, which the fear of men, as well as the fear of God, may prevent, but from the most secret and inward evils, which is a special part of mortification, Lev. xix. 14. It keeps men from those evils, which no eye nor ear of man can possibly discover. The fear of the Lord breaks temptations, baited with pleasure, with profit, and with secrecy. In a word, if ever you be cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, it must be by the fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1.

* *Rule* 4. Study the vanity of the creature, and labour to get true notions of the emptiness and transitoriness thereof; if

* Readers, if ever you would have a true sight of the emptiness and vanity of the creature, and get a mortified heart to the world, now is the time; for at this day the providence of God hath withered all the fading flowers of earthly delights, and shewed you the world's back parts, as it is departing from you.

ever you will attain to the mortification of your affections towards it. It is the falſe picture and image of the world, in our fancy, that crucifies us with ſo many cares, fears and ſollicitudes about it: and it is the true picture and image of the world, repreſented to us, in the glaſs of the word, which greatly helps to crucify our affections to the world. O if we did but know and believe three things about the world, we ſhould never be ſo fond of it as we are, *viz.* the fading, defiling, and deſtroying nature of it. The beſt and ſweeteſt enjoyments of the world, are but fading flowers and withered graſs, Iſa. xiv. 6. James i. 10, 11. yea, it is of a defiling, as well as a fading nature, 1 John v. 19. it lies in wickedneſs, it ſpreads univerſal infection among *all* mankind, 2 Pet. i. 4. yea, it deſtroys, as well as defiles multitudes of ſouls, *drowning men in perdition*, 1 Tim. vi. 9. Millions of ſouls will wiſh, to eternity, they had never known the riches, pleaſures, or honours of it. Were this believed, how would men ſlacken their pace, and cool themſelves in the violent and eager purſuit of the world! This greatly tends to promote mortification.

Rule 5. Be careful to cut off all the occaſions of ſin, and keep at the greateſt diſtance from temptations, if ever you will mortify the deeds of the body: The ſucceſs, and prevalency of ſin, mainly depends upon the wiles, and ſtratagems it makes uſe of, to enſnare the incautious ſoul; therefore the apoſtle bids us keep off, at the greateſt diſtance. 1 Theſ. v. 22. "Abſtain "from all appearances of evil." Prov. viii. 8. "Come not nigh "unto the door of her houſe." He that dares venture to the very brink of ſin, diſcovers but little light in his underſtanding, and leſs tenderneſs in his conſcience; he neither knows ſin, nor fears it, as he ought to do: And it is uſual with God to chaſtiſe ſelf-confidence, by ſhameful lapſes into ſin.

Rule 6. If you will ſucceſsfully mortify the corruptions of your nature, never engage againſt them in your own ſingle ſtrength, Eph. vi. 10. When the apoſtle draws forth Chriſtians into the field, againſt ſin, he bids them "be ſtrong in the "Lord, and in the power of his might." O remember what a mere feather thou art, in the guſts of temptation; call to mind the height of Peter's confidence, "though all men forſake thee, "yet will not I;" and the depth of his fall, ſhame and ſorrow. A weak Chriſtian, trembling in himſelf, depending by faith, upon God, and graciouſly aſſiſted by him, ſhall be able to ſtand, againſt the ſhock of temptation, when the bold, and confident

reſolutions of others (like Pendleton in our Engliſh ſtory) ſhall melt away, as wax before the flames.

Rule 7. Set in with the mortifying deſign of God, in the day of thine affliction; ſanctified afflictions are ordered, and preſcribed in heaven, for the purging of our corruptions. Iſa. xxvii. 9. "By this, therefore, ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, "and this is all the fruit, to take away his ſin." It is a fair glaſs to repreſent the evil of ſin, and the vanity of the creature, to imbitter the world, and diſguſt thy affections toward it: Fall in, therefore, with the gracious deſign of God; follow every affliction with prayer, that God would follow it with his bleſſing. God kills thy comforts, out of no other deſign but to kill thy corruptions with them; wants are ordained to kill wantonneſs, poverty is appointed to kill pride, reproaches are permitted to pull down ambition: Happy is the man who underſtands, approves, and heartily ſets in with the deſign of God, in ſuch afflicting providences.

Rule 8. Bend the ſtrength of your duties, and endeavours, againſt your proper, and ſpecial ſin; it is in vain to lop off branches, whilſt this root of bitterneſs remains untouched: This was David's practice, Pſal. xviii. 23. "I was, alſo, upright be-"fore him, and I kept myſelf from mine iniquity." We obſerve, in natural men, that one faculty is more vigorous than another; we find, in nature, that one ſoil ſuits with ſome ſorts of ſeed, rather than another: And every believer may find his nature, and conſtitution, inclining him to one ſin, rather than another: As graces, ſo corruptions exceed one another, even in the regenerate. The power of ſpecial corruptions ariſes from our conſtitutions, education, company, cuſtom, callings, and ſuch like occaſions; but from whenceſoever it comes, this is the ſin that moſt endangers us, moſt eaſily beſets us; and, according to the progreſs of mortification in that ſin, we may ſafely eſtimate the degrees of mortification in other ſins: Strike, therefore, at the life, and root of your own iniquity.

Rule 9. Study the nature, and great importance of thoſe things which are to be won, or loſt, according to the ſucceſs, and iſſue of this conflict: Your life is a race, eternal glory is the prize, grace and corruption are the antagoniſts, and, accordingly as either finally prevails, eternal life is won, or loſt. 1 Cor. ix. 24. "Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, "but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain." This condition will make mortification appear the moſt rational, and neceſſary thing to you, in the whole world. Shall I loſe heaven for indulging the fleſh, and humouring a wanton appe-

tite! God forbid. "I keep under my body (ſaith Paul) and "bring it into ſubjection; leſt that by any means, when I "have preached to others, I myſelf ſhould be a caſt-away," 1 Cor. ix. 28.

Rule 10. Accuſtom your thoughts to ſuch meditations as are proper to mortify ſin in your affections, elſe all endeavours, to mortify it, will be but faint, and languid: To this purpoſe, I ſhall recommend the following meditations, as proper means to deſtroy the intereſt of ſin.

Meditation 1. Conſider the evil that is in ſin, and how terrible the appearances of God will one day be, againſt thoſe that obey it, in the luſt thereof. Rom. i. 18. "The wrath of God "is revealed from heaven, againſt all ungodlineſs, and unrighteouſneſs of men." 1 Theſ. i. 7, 8, 9. "The Lord Jeſus "ſhall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and "that obey not the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: who ſhall "be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of "the Lord, and from the glory of his power." Let your thoughts dwell much upon the conſideration of the fruits, and conſequences of ſin; it ſhews its faireſt ſide to you, in the hour of temptation. O but conſider how it will look upon you, in the day of affliction, Num. xxii. 23. in that day your ſin will find you out: Think what its aſpect will be, in a dying hour. 1 Cor. xv. 56. "The ſting of death is ſin." Think what the frightful remembrances of it will be, at the bar of judgment, when Satan ſhall accuſe, conſcience ſhall upbraid, God ſhall condemn, and everlaſting burnings ſhall avenge the evil of it: ſuch thoughts as theſe are mortifying thoughts.

Meditation 2. Think what it coſt the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to expiate the guilt of ſin, by ſuffering the wrath of the great and terrible God for it, in our room: the meditations of a crucified Chriſt, are very crucifying meditations unto ſin, Gal. vi. 14. he ſuffered unſpeakable things for ſin; it was a divine wrath which lay upon his ſoul for it; that wrath, of which the prophet ſaith, Nahum i. 5, 6. "The mountains quake at him, and the hills "melt. Who can ſtand before his indignation? And who can "abide in the fierceneſs of his anger? his fury is poured out "like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him." It was unmixed, and unallayed wrath, poured out in the fulneſs of it, even to the laſt drop; and ſhall we be ſo eaſily drawn to the commiſſion of thoſe ſins, which put Chriſt under ſuch ſufferings? O do but read ſuch ſcriptures as theſe, Luke xxii. 44. Mat. xxvi. 36, 37. Mark xiv. 33. and ſee what a plight ſin put

the Lord of glory into; how the wrath of God put him into a ſore amazement, a bloody ſweet, and made his ſoul heavy, even unto death.

Meditation 3. Conſider what a grief and wound the ſins of believers are to the Spirit of God, Eph. iv. 30. Ezek. xvi. 43. Iſa. lxiii. 10. O how it grieves the holy Spirit of God! Nothing is more contrary to his nature. "O do not that abominable "thing which I hate," ſaith the Lord, Jer. xliv. 4. Nothing obſtructs, and croſſes the ſanctifying deſign of the Spirit, as ſin doth; defacing and ſpoiling the moſt rare, and admirable workmanſhip, that ever God wrought in this world; violating all the engagements laid upon us by the love of the Father, by the death of his Son, by the operations of his Spirit, in all his illuminations, convictions, compunctions, renovation, preſervation, obſignation, and manifold conſolations. Lay this meditation upon thy heart, believer, and ſay, *Sicne reſpondis?* doſt thou thus requite the Lord, O my ungrateful heart, for all his goodneſs? Is this the fruit of his temporal, ſpiritual, common, and peculiar mercies, which are without number?

Meditation 4. Conſider with yourſelves, that no real good, either of profit, or pleaſure, can reſult from ſin; you can have no pleaſure in it, whatever others may have, it being againſt your new nature; and as for that brutiſh pleaſure, and evanid joy, which others have in ſin, it can be but for a moment; for either they muſt repent, or not repent: if they do repent, the pleaſure of ſin will be turned into the gall of aſps, here; if they do not repent, it will terminate in everlaſting howlings, hereafter. That is a ſmart queſtion, Rom. vi. 21. "What fruit had "ye in thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed? For the end "of thoſe things is death." You that are believers, muſt never expect any pleaſure in ſin; for you can neither commit it, without regret; nor reflect upon it, without ſhame, and confuſion: expect no better conſequents of ſin, than the woundings of conſcience, and diſmal cloudings of the face of God; that is all the profit of ſin. O let theſe things ſink into your heart.

Meditation 5. Conſider what the damned ſuffer for thoſe ſins which the devil now tempteth you to commit; it hath deprived them of all good, all outward good, Luke xvi. 25. all ſpiritual good, Mat. xxv. 41. and of all hope of enjoying any good, for ever: and as it hath deprived them of all good, ſo it hath remedileſly plunged them into all poſitive miſery: miſery from without, the wrath of God being come upon them to the uttermoſt; and miſery from within, for *their worm dieth not*, Mark ix. 44. The memory of things paſt, the ſenſe of things preſent, and the

fearful expectations of things to come, are the gnawings and bitings of the worm of conscience, at every bite whereof, damned souls give a dreadful shriek; crying out, O the worm! the worm! Would any man, that is not forsaken by reason, run the hazard of those eternal miseries, for the brutish pleasures of a moment?

Meditation 6. Bethink yourselves what inexcusable hypocrisy it will be in you, to indulge yourselves in the private satisfaction of your lusts, under a contrary profession of religion: you are a people that profess holiness, and professedly own yourselves to be under the government and dominion of Christ: and must the worthy name of Christ be only used to cloak and cover your lusts and corruptions, which are so hateful to him? God forbid. You daily pray against sin, you confess it to God, you bewail it, you pour out supplications for pardoning and preventing grace; are you in jest or earnest, in these solemn duties of religion? Certainly, if all those duties produce no mortification, you do but flatter God with your lips, and put a dreadful cheat upon your own souls. Nay do you not frequently censure and condemn those things in others, and dare you allow them in yourselves? What horrid hypocrisy is this? Christians are dead to sin, Rom. vi. 2. dead to it by profession, dead to it by obligation, dead to it by relation to Christ, who died for them; and how shall they, that are so many ways dead to sin, live any longer therein? O think not that God hates sin the less in you, because you are his people *, nay, that very consideration aggravates it the more, Amos iii. 2.

Meditation 7. Consider with yourselves what hard things some Christians have chosen, to endure and suffer, rather than they would defile themselves with guilt; and shall every small temptation ensnare and take your souls? Read over the xi. chapter to the Hebrews, and see what the saints have endured to escape sin; no torments were so terrible to them, as the displeasure of God, and woundings of conscience; and did God oblige them more by his grace and favour, than he hath obliged you? O Christians, how can you, that have found such mercies, mercies as free, pardons as full as ever any souls found, show less care, less fear, less tenderness of grieving the Spirit of God than others have done; certainly, if you did see sin with the same eyes they saw it, you would hate it as deeply, watch against it as

* The very faults and sins of the faithful are the objects of God's hatred and displeasure, but this is merely a hatred of their sin, not of their persons. *Daven. on Col.* i. 10.

carefully, and reſiſt it as vigorouſly as any of the ſaints have done before you.

Meditation 8. Conſider with yourſelves what ſweet pleaſure, rational and ſolid comfort is to be found in the mortification of ſin: It is not the fulfilling of your luſts can give you the thouſandth part of that comfort, and contentment that the reſiſtance of them, and victory over them will give you. Who can expreſs the comfort that is to be found in the chearing teſtimony of an acquitting, and abſolving conſcience? 2 Cor. i. 12. Remember what ſatisfaction and peace it was to Hezekiah upon his ſuppoſed death-bead, when he turned to the wall, and ſaid, "Remember now, O Lord, I beſeech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart; and have done that which is good in thy ſight," Iſa. xxxviii. 3.

Fourth uſe, for examination.

In the next place, this point naturally puts us upon the examination, and trial of our own hearts, whether we, who ſo confidently claim a ſpecial intereſt in Chriſt, have crucified the fleſh with its affections and luſts. And becauſe two ſorts of perſons will be concerned in this trial, *viz.* the weaker, and the ſtronger Chriſtians; I ſhall therefore lay down two ſorts of evidences of mortification, one reſpecting the ſincerity, and truth, the other reſpecting the ſtrength, and progreſs of that work in confirmed and grown Chriſtians, and both excluding falſe pretenders.

Firſt, There are ſome things that are evidential of the truth and ſincerity of mortification, even in the weakeſt Chriſtians: as,

Firſt, True tenderneſs of conſcience in all known ſins, one as well as another, is a good ſign ſin hath loſt its dominion in the ſoul. O it is a ſpecial mercy to have a heart that ſhall ſmite and reprove us for thoſe things that others make nothing of: To check, and admoniſh us for our ſecret ſins, which can never turn to our reproach among men: this is a good ſign that we hate ſin: However, through the weakneſs of the fleſh we may be enſnared by it. Rom. vii. 15. "What I hate, that I do."

Secondly, The ſincere and earneſt deſires of our ſouls to God in prayer for heart-purging, and ſin-mortifying grace, is a good ſign our ſouls have no love for ſin. Canſt thou ſay, poor believer, in the truth of thy heart; that if God would give thee thy choice, it would pleaſe thee better to have ſin caſt out, than to have the world caſt in; that thy heart is not ſo earneſt with God for daily bread, as it is for heart-purging grace? This is a comfortable evidence that ſin is nailed to the croſs of Chriſt.

Thirdly, Do you make conſcience of guarding againſt the occaſions of ſin? Do you keep a daily watch over your hearts and ſenſes, according to 1 John v. 18. Job xxxi. 1. This ſpeaks a true deſign and purpoſe of mortification alſo.

Fourthly, Do you rejoice, and bleſs God from your hearts, when the providence of God orders any means for the prevention of ſin? Thus did David, 1 Sam. xxv. 33. "And David "ſaid to Abigail, Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael which ſent "thee this day to meet me, and bleſſed be thy advice, and bleſ-"ſed be thou which haſt kept me this day from coming to "ſhed blood, and from avenging myſelf with my own hand."

Fifthly, In a word, though the thoughts of death may be terrible in themſelves, yet if the expectation, and hope of your deliverance from ſin thereby, do ſweeten the thoughts of it to your ſouls, it will turn unto you for a teſtimony, that you are not the ſervants and friends of ſin. And ſo much briefly of the firſt ſort of evidences.

Secondly, There are other ſigns, of a more deep and thorough mortification of ſin, in more grown and confirmed believers, and ſuch are theſe.

Firſt, The more ſubmiſſive and quiet any man is under the will of God, in ſmart and afflicting providences, the more that man's heart is mortified unto ſin, Pſal. cxix. 67, 71. Col. i. 11.

Secondly, The more able any one is to bear the reproaches, and rebukes of his ſin, the more mortification there is in that man, Pſal. cxli. 5.

Thirdly, The more eaſily any man can reſign, and give up his deareſt earthly comforts, at the call and command of God, the more progreſs that man hath made in the work of mortification, Heb. xi. 17. 2 Sam. xv. 25.

Fourthly, The more power any man hath to reſiſt ſin in the firſt motions of it, and ſtifle it in the birth; the greater degree of mortification that man hath attained, Rom. vii. 23, 24.

Fifthly, If great changes, upon our outward condition, make no change for the worſe upon our ſpirits, but we can bear proſperous, and adverſe providences with an equal mind; then mortification is advanced far in our ſouls, Phil. iv. 11, 12.

Sixthly, The more fixed, and ſteady our hearts are with God in duty, and the leſs they are infeſted with wandering thoughts, and earthly interpoſitions; the more mortification there is in that ſoul. And ſo much briefly of the evidences of mortification.

Fifth use, for consolation.

It only remains, that I shut up all with a few words of consolation unto all that are under the mortifying influence of the Spirit. Much might be said for the comfort of such. In brief,

First, Mortified sin shall never be your ruin: 'Tis only *reigning* sin that is *ruining* sin, Rom. viii. 13. Mortified sins, and pardoned sins, shall never lie down with us in the dust.

Secondly, If sin be *dying*, your souls are *living*; for dying unto sin, and living unto God, are inseparably connected, Rom. vi. 11.

Thirdly, If sin be dying in you, it is certain that Christ died for you, and you cannot desire a better evidence of it, Rom. vi. 5, 6.

Fourthly, If sin be dying under the mortifying influences of the Spirit, and it be your daily labour to resist and overcome it, you are then in the direct way to heaven, and eternal salvation; which few, very few in the world shall find, Luke xiii. 24.

Fifthly, To shut up all, if you, through the Spirit, be daily mortifying the deeds of the body, then the death of Christ is effectually applied by the Spirit unto your souls, and your interest in him is unquestionable: For they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, and they that have so crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts, are Christ's.

Blessed be God for a crucified Christ.

* *

SERMON XXIX.

Of the Imitation of CHRIST, in holiness of Life, and the necessity of it in all Believers.

1 JOHN ii. 6. *He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

THE express, and principal design of the apostle in this chapter, is to propound marks and signs, both *negative* and *positive*, for the trial and examination of men's claims to Christ; amongst which (not to spend time about the coherence) my text is a principal one; a trial of mens interest in Christ, by their imitation of Christ. It is supposed by some expositors, that the apostle, in laying down this mark, had a special design

to overthrow the wicked doctrine of the Carpocratians, who taught (as Epiphanius relates it) that men might have as much communion with God in sin, as in duty. In full opposition to which the apostle lays down this proposition, wherein he asserts the necessity of a Christ-like conversation, in all that claim union with him, or interest in him. The words resolve themselves into two parts, *viz.*

1. A claim to Christ supposed.

2. The only way to have our claim warranted.

First, We have here a claim to Christ supposed; "if any man "say he abideth in him:" Abiding in Christ is an expression denoting proper, and real interest in Christ, and communion with him; for it is put in opposition to those temporary, light, and transient effects of the gospel, which are called a morning dew, or an early cloud; such a receiving of Christ as that, Mat. xiii. 21. which is but a present flash, sudden and vanishing; abiding in Christ notes a solid, durable, and effectual work of the Spirit, thoroughly and everlastingly joining the soul to Christ. Now, if any man, whosoever he be (for this indefinite is equivalent to an universal term) let him never think his claim to be good, and valid, except he take this course to adjust it.

(2.) *Secondly*, The only way to have this claim warranted, and that must be by *so walking even as he walked;* which words carry in them the necessity of our imitation of Christ. But it is not to be understood indefinitely, and universally of all the works or actions of Christ, some of which were extraordinary and miraculous; some purely mediatory, and not imitable by us: In these paths no Christian can follow Christ; nor may so much as attempt to walk as he walked. But the words point at the ordinary, and imitable ways, and works of Christ; therein it must be the care of all to follow him, that profess and claim interest in him; they must so walk as he walked, this [so] is a very bearing word in this place; the emphasis of the text seems to lie in it; however, certain it is that this *so walking* doth not imply an equality with Christ in holiness, and obedience; for as he was filled with the Spirit without measure, and anointed with that oil of gladness above his fellows, so the purity, holiness, and obedience of his life are never to be matched, or equalized by any of the saints. But this *so walking*, only notes a sincere intention, design, and endeavour to imitate and follow him in all the paths of holiness, and obedience, according to the different measures of grace received. The life of Christ is the believer's copy, and though the believer cannot

draw one line, or letter exact as his copy is, yet his eye is ſtill upon it, he is looking unto Jeſus, Heb. xii. 2. and labouring to draw all the lines of his life, as agreeably as he is able, unto Chriſt his pattern.

Hence the obſervation is,

Doct. *That every man is bound to the imitation of Chriſt, under penalty of forfeiting his claim to Chriſt.*

The ſaints imitation of Chriſt is ſolemnly enjoined by many great and expreſs commands of the goſpel; ſo you find it, 1 Pet. i, 15, "But as he that hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in "all manner of converſation:" So Eph. v. 1, 2. "Be ye there-"fore followers of God as dear children, and walk in love, as "Chriſt alſo hath loved us." "Chriſtians (ſaith * Bernard) "receive this name from Chriſt; and it is very meet that as "they inherit his name, ſo they ſhould alſo imitate his holi-"neſs." Now to ſtate the method of this diſcourſe, it will be needful to diſcuſs, and open three things in the doctrinal part.

1. What the ſaints imitation of Chriſt ſuppoſes, and comprizes.

2. In what particulars they are eſpecially bound to imitate Chriſt.

3. Why no claim to Chriſt is valid without this imitation of him.

And then apply the whole in divers uſes.

(1.) *Firſt*, What the ſaints imitation of Chriſt ſuppoſeth and compriſeth. Now there are divers great, and weighty truths ſuppoſed and implied in this imitation of Chriſt; or walking as he walked, *viz.*

Firſt, It ſuppoſes, that no Chriſtian, is, or may pretend to be a rule to himſelf, to act according to the dictates of his own will and pleaſure, for as no man hath wiſdom enough to direct and govern himſelf; ſo if his own will were made the rule of his own actions, it would be the higheſt invaſion of the divine prerogative that could be imagined: "I know, O Lord, (ſaith Je-"remy) that the way of man is not in himſelf, it is not in him "that walketh to direct his own ſteps," Jer. x. 23. We may as well pretend to be our own makers as our own guides. It is a pretty obſervation of Aquinas, that if the workman's hand were the rule of his work, it were impoſſible he ſhould ever err in working: And if the will of man were the only law and guide

* *Chriſtiani a Chriſto nomen acceperunt, et operæ prætium eſt, ut ſicut ſunt hæredes nominis, ita ſint imitatores ſanctitatis.* Bern. ſent. lib. p. 436.

of his way, we might then say no man would sin in his walking. The apostle indeed, saith of the Heathens, Rom. ii. 14. "That "they are a law to themselves;" but it is not his meaning, that their will is their law, but the law of God engraven upon their hearts; the light and dictates of their own consciences, did oblige, and bind them as a law.

Secondly, This imitation of Christ implies, that as no man is, or may pretend to be his own guide, so no mere man, how wise, or holy soever he be, may pretend to be a rule to other men; but Christ is the rule of every man's way, and walking. It is true, indeed, the apostle saith, "We should be followers of them, who "through faith, and patience, inherit the promises," Heb. vi. 12. And, again, James v. 10. "Take, my brethren, the prophets, "who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of "suffering affliction, and of patience." But you must always remember, that there is a two-fold rule;

1. *Regula regulans*, the rule ruling.
2. *Regula regulata*, the rule ruled.

The wisest, and holiest among men, may pretend no higher than *a ruled rule*. The great apostle, though filled with as great a measure of the Spirit of wisdom, and holiness, as ever was possessed by any mere man; yet goes no higher than this, 1 Cor. xi. 1. "Be ye followers of me, as I, also, am of Christ." The best of men are but men, at best; they have their errors, and defects, which they freely acknowledge; and where they differ from Christ, it is our duty to differ from them: We may not pin our faith upon any man's sleeve, for we know not where he will carry it. It was the commendation which Paul gave of the Thessalonians, 1 Thes. i. 6. "And ye became fol- "lowers of us and of the Lord." The noble Bereans were also commended for searching the scriptures, and examining the apostles doctrine by it; and it was a good reply of the *father* to a clamorous disputant, crying, Hear me, hear me; "* I will nei- "ther hear thee, nor do thou hear me; but let us both hear "Christ."

Thirdly, The imitation of Christ implies the necessity of sanctification, in all his followers; forasmuch as it is impossile there should be a practical conformity, in point of obedience, where there is not a conformity in spirit, and in principle; all external conformity to Christ's practice, depends upon an internal conformity to Christ, in the principle, and Spirit of holiness. It is very plain, from Ezek. xi. 19, 20. that a new heart must be giv-

* *Nec ego te, nec tu me, sed ambo audiamus Christum.* Aug.

en us, and a new Spirit put into us, before we can walk in God's ſtatutes; we muſt firſt live in the Spirit, before we can walk in the Spirit, Gal. v. 25.

Fourthly, The imitation of Chriſt plainly holds forth this, that chriſtian religion is a very preciſe, and ſtrict religion; no way countenancing licentiouſneſs, or indulging men in their luſts; it allows no man to walk looſely, and inordinately; but rejects every man's claim to Chriſt, who ſtudies and labours not to tread exactly in the foot-ſteps of his holy, and heavenly example. Prophaneneſs, and licentiouſneſs, therefore, can find no ſhelter, or protection under the wing of the goſpel; this is the univerſal rule, laid upon all the profeſſors of the chriſtian religion; "Let every one that nameth the name of Chriſt, de-"part from iniquity," 2 Tim. ii. 19. *(i. e.)* let him either put on the life of Chriſt, or put off the name of Chriſt; let him ſhew the hand of a Chriſtian, in works of holineſs, and obedience, or elſe the tongue, and language of a Chriſtian, muſt gain no belief, or credit.

Fifthly, The imitation of Chriſt neceſſarily implies the defectiveneſs, and imperfection of the beſt of men in this life; for if the life of Chriſt be our pattern, the beſt, and holieſt of men muſt confeſs they come ſhort in every thing, of the rule of their duty. Our pattern is ſtill above us, the beſt of men are aſhamed, when they compare their lives with the life of Chriſt: It is true, a vain heart may ſwell with pride, when a man compares himſelf with other men; thus meaſuring ourſelves by ourſelves, and comparing ourſelves among ourſelves, we ſhew our folly, and nouriſh our pride; but if any man will compare his own life with Chriſt's, he will find abundant cauſe, at every time, and in every thing, to be humbled. Paul was a great proficient in holineſs, and obedience; he had been long ſtriving to come up to the top of holineſs: yet when he looks up, and ſees the life of Chriſt, and rule of duty, ſo far above him, he reckons himſelf ſtill but at the foot of the hill. Phil. iii. 12. "Not as though I had already attained, either were al-"ready perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend, "that for which, alſo, I am apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus." *q. d.* Alas! I am not come up to my duty; I am a great way behind: but I am following after, if at laſt I may attain it: Perfection is in my expectation, and hope, at laſt, not in my attainment here.

Sixthly, The imitation of Chriſt, as our general rule, and pattern, neceſſarily implies the tranſcending holineſs of the Lord Jeſus; his holineſs is greater than the holineſs of all creatures,

" For only that which is firſt, and beſt, in every kind, is the " rule, and meaſure, of all the reſt *." It is the height of ſaint's ambition, to be made conformable to Chriſt, Phil. iii. 10. Chriſt hath a double perfection, a perfection of *being*, and a perfection of *working*: His life was a perfect rule; no blot or error could be found therein; for he was " holy, harmleſs, un- " defiled, ſeparate from ſinners:" And ſuch an high-prieſt, became us, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, Heb. vii. 26. The conformity of profeſſors to Chriſt's example, is the teſt, and meaſure of all their graces; the nearer any man comes to this pattern, the nearer he approaches towards perfection.

Seventhly, The Chriſtian's imitation of Chriſt, under penalty of loſing his claim to Chriſt, neceſſarily implies ſanctification, and obedience, to be the evidences of our juſtification, and intereſt in Chriſt: Aſſurance is unattainable, without obedience; we can never be comfortable Chriſtians, except we be ſtrict, and regular Chriſtians. Gal. vi. 16. " As many as walk " according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy; and up- " on the Iſrael of God." A looſe, and careleſs converſation, can never be productive of true peace, and conſolation. 2 Cor. i. 12. " This is our rejoicing, the teſtimony of our conſcience; " that in ſimplicity, and godly ſincerity; not with fleſhly wiſ- " dom, but by the grace of God; we have had our converſation " in the world." Let men talk what they will, of the immediate ſealings, and comforts of the Spirit, without any regard to holineſs, or reſpect to obedience: Sure I am, whatever deluſion they meet with in that way, true peace, and conſolation, is only to be expected, and found here: " The fruit of righteouſneſs " ſhall be peace, and the effect of righteouſneſs quietneſs, and " aſſurance for ever." We have it not for our holineſs, but we always have it in the way of holineſs. And ſo much of the firſt particular, namely, what the imitation of Chriſt implies and comprizes in it.

Secondly, In the next place, we are to enquire, in what things all, who profeſs Chriſt, are obliged to the imitation of him; or what thoſe excellent graces, in the life of Chriſt, were, which are propounded as patterns to the ſaints.

The life of Chriſt was a living law; all the graces, and virtues of the Spirit, were repreſented in their glory, and brighteſt luſtre in his converſation upon earth †: Never Man ſpake,

* *Primum et optimum in unoquoque genere eſt regula et menſura cæterorum.*

† What have you to do with virtues, who are ignorant of Chriſt's virtue?

as he ſpake; never any lived, as he lived. "We beheld his "glory (ſaith the evangeliſt) as the glory of the only begotten "of the Father, full of grace, and truth," John i. 14. But to deſcend to the particular, imitable excellencies, in the life of Chriſt, which are high patterns, and excellent rules, for the converſation of his people; we ſhall, from among many others, ſingle out the ten following particulars, which we are obliged to imitate.

Pattern 1. And firſt of all, the purity, and holineſs of the life of Chriſt, is propoſed as a glorious pattern for the ſaint's imitation. 1 Pet. i. 15. "As he which hath called you is holy, "ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation;" ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ, in every point, and turning of your lives. There is a two-fold holineſs in Chriſt, the holineſs of his nature, and the holineſs of his practice; his holy being, and his holy working: This obligeth all that profeſs intereſt in him, to a two-fold holineſs, *viz.* holineſs *in actu primo*, in the principles of it, in their hearts; and holineſs *in actu ſecundo*, in the practice, and exerciſe of it, in their converſations. It is very true, we cannot, in all reſpects, imitate the holineſs of Chriſt, for he is *eſſentially* holy; proceeding, by nature, as a pure beam of holineſs from the Father: and when he was incarnate, he came into the world immaculate, and pure from the leaſt ſtain of pollution: There it was ſaid, Luke i. 25. "That holy thing which ſhall be born "of thee ſhall be called the Son of God." In this we can never be like Chriſt, in the way of our production; for "who "can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean? Not one." The Lord Jeſus was, alſo, *efficiently* holy, (*i. e.*) he makes others holy; therefore his ſufferings, and blood, are called a fountain opened "for ſin and for uncleanneſs, (*i. e.*) to cleanſe other men's ſouls, Zech. xiii. 1. In this Chriſt, alſo, is inimitable; no man can make himſelf, or others, holy. That is a great truth, though it will hardly go down with proud nature, *Minus eſt te feciſſe hominem, quam ſanctum;* we may ſooner make ourſelves to be men, than to be ſaints. Beſide, Chriſt is infinitely holy, as he is *God;* and there are no meaſures ſet to his holineſs, as *Mediator*. John iii. 34. "For God giveth not "the Spirit by meaſure unto him." But, notwithſtanding theſe excepted reſpects, the holineſs of Chriſt is propounded as a pattern, for our imitation, ſix ways.

virtue? Where, pray you, is true prudence, but in Chriſt's doctrine? Or true temperance, but in Chriſt's life? Or true fortitude, but in Chriſt's paſſion?

First, He was *truly*, and *sincerely* holy, without fiction, or simulation; and this appeared in the greatest trial of the truth of holiness, that ever was made in this world. John xiv. 30. "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me:" When he was agitated, and shaken, with the greatest temptations, no dregs appeared; he was like pure fountain-water, in a crystal glass. The hypocrite makes shew of more holiness than he hath, but there was more holiness in Christ, than ever appeared to the view of men. We may say, of the way of Christ, what the ‡ *philosopher* saith of the *milky way* in the heavens; that those faint streams of light, which we see there, are nothing else but the reflection of innumerable stars which shine there, though they are invisible to us. There was much inward beauty in him, and so there ought to be in all his followers; our holiness, like Christ's, must be sincere, and real, Eph. iv. 24. shining with inward beauty towards God, rather than towards men.

Secondly, Christ was *uniformly* holy, at one time, as well as another; in one place, and company, as well as another: He was still like himself, an holy Christ; one and the same tenor of holiness ran throughout his whole life, from first to last: So must it be with all his people, holy in all manner of conversation. Christians, look to your copy, and be sure to imitate Christ, in this; write fair, after your copy; let there not be here a word, and there a blot; one part of your life heavenly, and pure, and another earthly, and dreggy; or (as one expresses it) now an heavenly rapture, and by and by a fleshly frolic.

Thirdly, Christ was *exemplarily* holy; a pattern of holiness to all that came nigh him, and conversed with him: O imitate Christ in this. It was the commendation of the Thessalonians, that they "were ensamples to all that believed in Macedonia "and Achaia; and that in every place their faith to God-ward "was spread abroad," 1 Thes. i. 7, 8. Let no man go out of your company, without conviction, or edification; so exemplary were the primitive Christians, Phil. iii. 17.

Fourthly, Christ was *strictly*, and *precisely* holy: "Which "of you convinceth me of sin?" The most envious, and observing eyes of his greatest enemies, could not pick a hole, or

‡ The Galaxy is a very great multitude of stars of the smallest size, whose smallness hinders their being perceived by us distinctly like the other stars, and their beams are mutually intermingled and confounded. *Contmb. de Meteor. cap. 2.*

find a flaw in any of his words, or actions: It is our duty to imitate Christ in this. Phil. ii. 15. "That ye may be blameless, "and harmless, the sons, of God, without rebuke, in the midst of "a crooked, and perverse nation, among whom ye shine" (or, as the word may be rendered, imperatively, φαινεσθε ως φωστηρες, "among whom shine ye) as lights in the world." Thus it becomes the followers of Christ to walk circumspectly, or precisely; "for so is the will of God that with well-doing ye may put "to silence the ignorance of foolish men, 1 Pet. ii. 15.

Fifthly, Christ was preservingly holy, holy to the last breath; as he began, so he finished his whole life in a constant course of holiness: in this also he is our great pattern. It becomes not any of his people to begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh; but on the contrary, their last works should be more than their first: "Let him that is holy, be holy still," Rev. xxii. 11.

Sixthly, In a word, the delight of Christ was only in holy things, and holy persons; they were his chosen companions; even so it becometh his people to have all their delights in the saints, and in the excellent of the earth, Psal. xvi. 3. Thus, Christians, be ye followers of Christ in his holiness; God hath decreed this conformity to Christ in all that shall be saved, Rom. viii. 29. he banisheth all unholy ones from his gracious presence for ever, 1 Cor. vi. 9. Heb. xii. 14. The design of Christ in dying for you was to make you pure and holy, Eph. v. 25, 26. O then, study holiness, eye your pattern, and as dear children, be ye followers of your most holy Lord Jesus Christ.

Pattern 2. The obedience of Christ to his Father's will, is a pattern for the imitation of all Christians: it is said of Christ, Heb. v. 8. that he "learned obedience by the things which he "suffered;" a text which labours under some difficulties: Christ learned obedience, and yet was not ignorant before of what he learned afterward; he was perfect in knowledge, and yet the apostle speaks of him as a proficient in the school of wisdom. But we must consider there are two ways of learning, *viz.* by

1. The comprehension of the mind.
2. By the experience of the sense.

Christ, as God, was perfect in knowledge; nothing could be added to him: but when he became man, then he came to understand, or learn by sufferings, as the apostle here speaks; which though it added nothing to his knowledge, yet it was a new method and way of knowing. Now the obedience of Christ is our pattern, whereunto we are obliged (as ever we will wan-

rant our claim of interest in him) to conform ourselves, in the following properties of it.

First, Christ's obedience was free and voluntary, not forced or compulsory; it was so from the very first undertaking of the work of our redemption, Prov. viii. 30, 31. "Then was I by "him as one brought up with him, And I was daily his delight, "rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part "of his earth; and my delights were with the Sons of men." And when the fulness of time was come for executing that blessed design, which had been in prospect from all eternity, how chearfully did the will of Christ echo to his Father's call, Psal. xl. 7. "Then said I, lo I come, in the volume of thy book it is "written of me." I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, "thy law is within my heart." Nor was this a flourish before he came into the field, and saw the enemy; for he laid down his life with the greatest chearfulness and spontaneity that could be, John x. 17, 18. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because "I lay down my life, that I might take it again; no man taketh "it from me, but I lay it down of myself:" and indeed the voluntariness of Christ, in his obedience unto death, gave his death the nature, and formality of a sacrifice; for so all sacrifices ought to be offered, Lev. i. 3. and so Christ's sacrifice was offered unto God, Eph. v. 2. It was as grateful a work to Christ to die for us, as it was to Moses his mother to take him to nurse from the hand of Pharaoh's daughter. O Christians tread in the steps of Christ's example; do nothing grudgingly for God, let not his commands be grievous, 1 John v. 3. If you do any thing for God willingly, you have a reward; if otherwise, a dispensation only is committed to you, 1 Cor. ix. 7. Obedince in Christ was an abasement to him, but in you a very great honour and advancement; you have reason therefore to obey with chearfulness.

Secondly, The obedience of Christ was universal and compleat, he was obedient to all the will of God, making no *demur* to the hardest service imposed by the will of God upon him, Phil. ii. 8. "He became obedient unto death, even the death of "the cross;" and though it is true, the humanity of Christ recoiled, and staggered, when that bitter cup of the wrath of God was given him to drink; yet how soon was that innocent aversation overcome in him, by a perfect submission? "Nevertheless not my will, but thine be done," Mat. xxvi. 39. Christians here is your pattern: happy art thou, reader, if thou canst say, when God calls thee to suffering, and self-denying

work, I am filled with the will of God. Such was Paul's *obedience*, Acts xxi. 13. "I am ready not only to be bound, but to "die at Jeruſalem for the name of the Lord Jeſus."

Thirdly, The obedience of Chriſt was ſincere and pure, without any baſe or by-end, purely aiming at the glory of God, John xvii. 4. "I have glorified thee on earth, I have finiſhed "the work thou gaveſt me to do." He ſought not honour of men. This was the great deſire of his ſoul, John xii. 28. "Father glorify thy name:" and truly the choiceſt part of your obedience conſiſts in the purity of your ends, and in this Chriſt is propounded as your pattern, Phil. ii. 3, 4, 5.

Fourthly, The ſtreams of Chriſt's obedience flowed from the ſpring and fountain of ardent love to God, John xiv. 31. "But "that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the "Father gave me commandment, even ſo I do:" Thus let all your obedience to God turn upon the hinge of love; for "love "is the fulfilling of the law," Rom. xiii. 10. Not as if no other duty but love were required in the law; but becauſe no act of obedience is acceptable to God, but that which is performed in love.

Fifthly, In a word, The obedience of Chriſt was conſtant, he was obedient unto the death, he was not weary of his work to the laſt. Such a patient continuance in well-doing is one part of your conformity to Chriſt, Rom. ii. 7. it is laid upon you by his own expreſs command, and a command backed with the moſt encouraging promiſe, Rev. ii. 10. "Be thou faithful "unto the death, and I will give thee the crown of life."

Pattern 3. The *ſelf-denial* of Chriſt is the pattern of believers, and their conformity unto it is their indiſpenſible duty, Phil. ii. 4, 5, 6. 2 Cor. viii. 9. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jeſ-"us Chriſt, that though he was rich, yet for our ſakes he became "poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." Jeſus Chriſt, for the glory of God, and the love he bare to the elect, denied himſelf all the delights and pleaſures of this world Mat. xx. 28. "The ſon of man came not to be miniſtred unto, but to "miniſter, and to give his life a ranſom for many;" he was all his life-time in the world, "a man of ſorrows and acquainted "with grief," Iſa. liii. 5. more unprovided of comfortable accommodations, than the birds of the air, or beaſts of the earth, Luke ix. 58. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air "have neſts, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" *. Yet this was the leaſt part of Chriſt's ſelf-denial: What did

* *Vulpibus in ſaltu rupes exciſa latebras*
Præbet, et aereis avibus dat ſilva quietem;

he not deny when he left the bosom of his Father, with the ineffable delights and pleasures he there enjoyed from eternity, and instead thereof to drink the cup, the bitter cup of his Father's wrath, for our sakes? O Christians, look to your pattern, and imitate your self-denying Saviour. There is a threefold self you are to deny for Christ.

First, Deny your *natural self* for him, Luke xiv. 26. Hate your own life, in competition with his glory, as well as your natural lusts, Titus ii. 12.

Secondly, Deny your *civil self* for Christ; whether they be gifts of the mind, Phil. iii. 8. or your dearest relations in the world, Luke xiv. 26.

Thirdly, Deny your *moral* and *religious self*, for Christ, your own righteousness, Phil. iii. 10. Deny sinful self absolutely, Col. iii. 4, 5. Deny natural self conditionally, *i. e.* be ready to forsake its interests at the call of God. Deny your religious self, even your own graces, comparatively, not in the notion of duties, but in the notion of righteousness: and to encourage you in this difficult work, consider,

First, What great things Christ denied for you, and what small matters you have to deny for him.

Secondly, How readily he denied all for your sakes, making no objections against the difficultest commands.

Thirdly, How uncapable you are to put any obligation upon Christ, to deny himself in the least for you, and what strong obligations Christ hath put you under, to deny yourselves in your greatest interests upon earth for him.

Fourthly, Remember that your self-denial is a condition consented to, and subscribed by yourselves, if ever you received Christ aright.

Fifthly, In a word, Consider how much your self-denial for Christ, makes for your advantage in both worlds, Luke, xviii, 29. O therefore look not every man upon his own things, but upon the things that are of Christ; let not that be justly charged upon you, which was charged upon them, Phil. ii. 21. "All seek "their own, not the things which are Christ's.

Pattern 4. The activity and diligence of Christ in finishing

Aft hominis Nato nullis succedere tectis
Est licitum.---------- Heins. in loc.
The craggy rock to foxes holes affords,
The pleasant woods a resting-place to birds;
For Christ no fixed habitation's found,
But what was borrow'd, or the naked ground.

the work of God, which was committed to him, was a pattern for all believers to imitate. It is said of him, Acts x. 38. "He "went about doing good." O what a great and glorious work did Christ finish in a little time! A work to be celebrated to all eternity by the praises of the redeemed. Six things were very remarkable in the diligence of Christ about his Father's work.

First, That his heart was intently set upon it, Psal. iv. 8. "Thy law is in the midst of my heart," or bowels.

Secondly, That he never fainted under the many great discouragements he frequently met withal in that work, Isa. xlii. 4. "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged.

Thirdly, That the shortness of his time provoked him to the greatest diligence, John ix. 4. "I must work the work of him that "sent me, while it is day, for the night cometh when no man "can work."

Fourthly, That he improveded all opportunities, companies, and occurrences to further the great work, which was under his hand, John iv. 6, 10.

Fifthly, Nothing more displeased him than when he met with dissuasions and discouragements in his work; upon that account it was that he gave Peter so sharp a check, Mat. viii. 33. "Get "thee behind me, Satan."

Sixthly, Nothing rejoiced his soul more, than the prosperity and success of his work, Luke x. 20, 21. When the disciples made the report of success of their ministry, 'tis said, "In that "hour Jesus rejoiced in Spirit." And O what a triumphant shout was that upon the cross at the accomplishment of his work, John xix. 30. *It is finished*!

Now, Christians, eye your pattern, look unto Jesus; trifle not away your lives in vanity. Christ was diligent, be not you slothful. And to encourage you in your imitation of Christ in labour and diligence, consider,

First, How great an honour God puts upon you, in employing you for his service: every vessel of service is a vessel of honour, 2 Tim. ii. 21. The apostle was very ambitious † of that honour, Rom. xv. 20. It was the glory of Eliakim to be fastned as a nail in a sure place, and to have many people hang upon him, Isa. xxii. 33.

Secondly, Your diligence in the work of God will be your great security in the hour of temptation; for "the Lord is "with you while you are with him," 2 Chron. xv. 2. The *schoolmen* put the question, How the saints in heaven became impeccable? and resolve it thus, that they are therefore freed from

† Φιλοτιμεομαι, *ambio, dictum verbum ab amore honoris*, Zanch.

ſin, becauſe they are continually imployed and ſwallowed up in the bleſſed viſions of God.

Thirdly, Diligence in the work of God is an excellent help to the improvement of grace. For, tho' gracious habits are not acquired, yet they are greatly improved by frequent acts; "To him that hath ſhall be given," Mat. xxv. 29. 'Tis a good note of *Luther*, *Fides pingueſcit operibus*, Faith improves by obedience.

Fourthly, Diligence in the work of God is the direct way to the aſſurance of the love of God, 2 Pet. xv. 10. This path leads you into heaven upon earth.

Fifthly, Diligence in bedience is a great ſecurity againſt backſliding: ſmall remiſſions in duty, and little neglects, increaſe by degrees unto great apoſtaſies, you may ſee how that diſeaſe is bred, by the method preſcribed for its cure, Rev. ii. 5. *Do thy firſt works.*

Sixthly, In a word, laborious diligence, in the day of life, will be your ſingular comfort when the night of death overtakes you, 2 Pet. i. 11. 2 Kings xx. 3.

Pattern 5. *Delight in God*, and in his ſervice, was eminently conſpicuous in the life of Chriſt, and is a rare pattern for believers imitation, John iv. 32, 34. "But he ſaid unto them, I have meat "to eat that ye know not of, my meat is to do the will of "him that ſent me, and to finiſh his work." The delights of Chriſt were all in heaven. The Son of man was in heaven, in reſpect of delight in God, while he converſed here among men. And if you be Chriſt's, heavenly things will be the delight of your ſouls alſo. Now ſpiritual delight is nothing elſe but the complacency and well-pleaſedneſs of a renewed heart, in converſing with God, and the things of God; reſulting from the agreeableneſs of them to the ſpiritual temper of his mind. Four things are conſiderable about ſpiritual delight.

Firſt, The nature of it, which conſiſteth in the complacency, reſt, and ſatisfaction of the mind in God, and ſpiritual things. The heart of a Chriſtian is centred, it is where it would be; it is gratified, in the higheſt, in the actings forth of faith, and love upon God; as the taſte is gratified with a ſuitable delicious reliſh, Pſal. lxiii. 5, 6, Pſal. cxix. 14. 24. Pſal. xvii. 18.

Secondly, The object of ſpiritual delight, which is God himſelf, and the things which relate to him. He is the bleſſed ocean into which all the ſtreams of ſpiritual delight do pour themſelves, Pſal. lxxiii. 25. "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and "on earth there is none that I deſire in compariſon of thee."

Thirdly, The ſubject of ſpiritual delight, which is a renewed

heart, and that only so far as it is renewed, Rom. vii. 22. "I "delight in the law of God after the inward man."

Fourthly, The principle and spring of this delight, which is the agreeableness of spiritual things to the temper and frame of a renewed mind. A sensitive pleasure arises from the suitableness of the faculty and object. So it is here, no delicious sweetness can be so pleasant to the taste, or beautiful colours to the eye, or melodious sounds to the ear, as spiritual things to the renewed souls, because spiritual senses are delicate, and the objects more excellent.

But my business here, is not so much to open its nature, as press you to the practice thereof in conformity to your great pattern, whose life was a life of delight in God, and whose work was performed with the greatest delight for God. "I delight "to do thy will, O my God." O Christians, strive to imitate your pattern in this. And to encourage you, I will briefly hint a few things.

First, Scarce any thing can be more evidential of sincerity, than a heart delighting in God, and the will of God. Hypocrites go as far as others in the material parts of duties, but here they are defective; they have no delight in God and things spiritual; but do whatsoever they do in religion, from the compulsions of conscience, or accommodations of self-ends.

Secondly, An heart delighting in God will be a choice help and means to perseverance. The reason why many so easily part with religion is, because their souls never tasted the sweetness of it; they never delighted in it; but the Christian who delights in the law of God, will be meditating on it day and night, and shall be like a tree planted by a river of water, whose leaf fadeth not, Psal. i. 2, 3.

Thirdly, This will represent religion very beautifully, to such as are yet strangers to it; you will then be able to invite them to Christ by your example, the language whereof will be like that, Psal. xxxiv. 8. "O taste and see that God is "good."

Fourthly, This will make all your services to God very pleasing, and acceptable through Christ; you will now begin to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven; your duties are so far *angelical* as they are performed in the strength of delight in God.

Object. But may not a sincere Christian act in duty without delight? Yea, may he not feel some kind of weariness in duties?

Solut. Yes doubtless he may; but then we must distinguish

betwixt the *temper*, and *distemper*, of a renewed heart; the best hearts are not always in their right frame.

Pattern 6. The *inoffensiveness* of the life of Christ upon earth, is an excellent pattern to all his people; he injured none, offended none, but was holy, and harmless, as the apostle speaks, Heb. vii. 26. He denied his own liberty to avoid occasion of offence; as in the case of the tribute-money, Mat. xix. 27. "The "children are free, notwithstanding lest we should offend them, "go," &c. So circumspect was Christ, and inoffensive among all men, that tho' his enemies sought occasion against him, yet could they find none, Luke vi. 7. Look unto Jesus, O ye professors of religion; imitate him in this gracious excellency of *his life*, according to his command, Phil. ii. 15. "That ye may "be harmless and blameless, the sons of God, without rebuke, "in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation." You are indeed, allowed the exercise of your prudence, but not a jot farther than will consist with your innocence. "Be ye wise as "serpents, and harmless as doves." 'Tis the rule of Christ, that you offend none, 1. Cor. x. 32. 2 Cor. vi. 3. And to engage you to the imitation of Christ in this, I must briefly press it with a few encouragements, which methinks should prevail with any heart that's truly gracious.

First, For the honour of Jesus Christ, be you inoffensive, his name is called upon you, his honour is concerned in your deportment; if your carriage in the world give just matter of offence, Christ's worthy name will be blasphemed thereby, Jam. ii. 7. Your inoffensive carriage is the only means to stop the mouths of detractors, 1 Pet. ii. 15.

Secondly, For the sake of souls, the precious and immortal souls of others, be wary that you give no offence: "Wo to the "world, (saith Christ), because of offence," Matth. xiii. 7. Nothing was more commonly objected against Christ, and religion, by the Heathen in Cyprian's time, than the loose and scandalous lives of professors: * "Behold, say they, these are the men, who "boast themselves to be redeemed from the tyranny of Satan, "to be dead to the world; nevertheless, see how they are o-"vercome by their own lusts." And much after the same rate Salvian brings in the wicked of his time, stumbling at the looseness of professors, and saying, Where is that catholic law which

* *Ecce qui jactant se redemptis à tyrannide Satanæ, qui prædicant se mortuos esse mundo, nihilominus vincuntur cupiditatibus suis.* Cyprian.

they believe? Where are the examples of piety, and chaſtity, which they have learned? *&c.* O Chriſtians, draw not the guilt of other men's eternal ruin upon your ſouls.

Thirdly, In a word, anſwer the ends of God in your ſanctification, and providential diſpoſe in the world, this way; by the holineſs and harmleſneſs of your lives, many may be won to Chriſt, 1 Pet iii. 1. What the Heathens ſaid of moral virtue, (which they called *verticordia*, turn-heart) that if it were but viſible to mortal eyes, all men would be enamoured with it, will be much more true of religion, when you ſhall repreſent the beauty of it in your converſation.

Pattern 7. The humility, and lowlineſs of Chriſt is propounded by himſelf, as a pattern for his people's imitation, Matth. xi. 29. "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly." He could abaſe, and empty himſelf of all his glory, Phil ii. 5, 6, 7. He could ſtoop to the meaneſt office, even to waſh the diſciples feet. We read but of one triumph in all the life of Chriſt upon earth, when he rode to Jeruſalem, the people ſtrewing branches in the way, and the very children in the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, crying, "Hoſanna to the ſon of David, Hoſanna in the higheſt;" and yet with what lowlineſs and humility was it performed by Chriſt, Matth. xxi. 5. "Behold thy King commeth unto thee "meek and lowly." The humility of Chriſt appeared in every thing he ſpake, or did. Humility diſcovered itſelf in his language, Pſal. xxii. 6. "I am a worm, and no man." In his actions, not refuſing the meaneſt office, John iii. 14. In his condeſcenſions to the worſt of men, upon which ground they called him "a friend to publicans and ſinners," Matth. xi. 19. But eſpecially, and above all, in ſtooping down from all his glory to a ſtate of the deepeſt contempt, for the glory of God, and our ſalvation. Chriſtians! here is your pattern; look to your meek, and humble Saviour, and tread in his ſteps; be you "cloathed with humility," 1 Pet. v. 5. Whoever are ambitious to be the world's *great ones*, let it be enough for you to be Chriſt's *little ones*. Convince the world, that ſince you knew God, and yourſelves, your pride hath been dying from that day. Shew your humility in your *habits*, 1 Pet. iii. 3. 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. In your *company*, not contemning the meaneſt, and pooreſt that fear the Lord, Pſal. xv. 4. Rom. xii. 16. In your *language*; that *dialect* befits your lips, Eph. iii. 8. "Leſs than "the leaſt of all ſaints;" but eſpecially in the low value, and humble thoughts you have of yourſelves, 1 Tim. i. 15. And to preſs this, I beſeech you to conſider,

Firſt, From how vile a root pride ſprings. Ignorance of

God, and of yourſelves, gives riſe and being to this ſin: They that know God will be humble, Iſa. vi. 5. And they that know themſelves cannot be proud, Rom. vii. 9.

Secondly, Conſider the miſchievous effects it produces: it eſtrangeth the ſoul from God, Pſal. cxxxviii. 6. It provokes God to lay you low, Job xl. 11, 12. It goes before deſtruction, and a dreadful fall, Prov. x. 18.

Thirdly, As it is a great *ſin*, ſo it is a bad *ſign*, Hab. ii. 4. "Behold his heart which is lifted up, is not upright in him."

Fourthly, How unſuitable it is to the ſenſe you have, and the complaints you make of your own corruptions, and ſpiritual wants; and, above all, how contrary it is to your pattern and example: Did Chriſt ſpeak, act, or think as you do? O learn humility from Jeſus Chriſt; it will make you precious in the eyes of God, Iſa. lvii. 15.

Pattern 8. The contentation of Chriſt, in a low and mean condition in the world, is an excellent pattern for his people's imitation. His lot, in this world, fell upon a condition of deepeſt poverty, and contempt: Yet how well was he ſatisfied, and contented with it! hear him expreſſing himſelf about it, Pſal. xvi. 6. "The lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant places; "yea, I have a goodly heritage." The contentation of his heart with a ſuffering condition, evidenced itſelf in his ſilence, under the greateſt ſufferings, Iſa. liii. 7. "He was oppreſſed, and he "was afflicted: yet he opened not his mouth: He is brought "as a lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before the ſhearers "is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth." O that in this alſo the pooreſt Chriſtians would imitate their Saviour, and learn to manage an afflicted condition with a contented ſpirit: Let there be no murmurs, complaints, or fooliſh charges of God heard from you, whatever ſtraits, or troubles he brings you into: For,

Firſt, The meaneſt, and moſt afflicted Chriſtian is owner of many rich, invaluable mercies, Eph. i. 3. 1 Cor. iii. 33. Is ſin pardoned, and God reconciled? then never open your mouths any more, Ezek. xvi. 63.

Secondly, You have many precious promiſes, that God will not forſake you in your ſtraits, Heb. xiii. 5. Iſa. xli. 17. And your whole life hath been a life of experiences of the faithfulneſs of God in his promiſes. Which of you cannot ſay with the church, Lam. iii. 23. "His mercies are new every morning, and "great is his faithfulneſs."

Thirdly, How uſeful and beneficial are all your afflictions to

you! They purge your sins, prevent your temptations, wean you from the world, and turn to your salvation: and how unreasonable then must your discontentedness at them be?

Fourthly, The time of your relief and full deliverance from all your troubles is at hand; the time is but short that you shall have any concernment about these things, 1 Cor. vii. 29. If the candle of your earthly comfort be blown out, yet remember it is but a little while to the break of day, and then there will be no need of candles. Besides,

Fifthly, Your lot falls by divine direction, upon you, and as bad as it is, it is much easier and sweeter than the condition of Christ in this world was: Yet he was contented, and why not you? O that we could learn contentment from Christ in every condition. And thus I have laid before you some excellent patterns in the life of Christ, for your imitation.

* *

SERMON XXX.

1 JOHN xi. 6. *He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

THESE words having been resolved into their parts, and their sense opened in the former sermon: The observation was this;

That every man is bound to the imitation of Christ, under penalty of forfeiting his claim to Christ.

In prosecution of this point, we have already shewn what the imitation of Christ imports, and what the imitable excellencies in the life of Christ are: It now remains that I shew you, in the next place, why all that profess Christ, are bound to imitate his example, and then apply the whole. Now the necessity of this imitation of Christ, will convincingly, appear divers ways.

First, From the established order of Salvation, which is fixed and unalterable: God that hath appointed the end, hath also established the means and order by which men shall attain the ultimate end. Now conformity to Christ is the established method in which God will bring souls to glory, Rom. viii. 29. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son; that he might be the first-born among many brethren." The same God who hath predestinated men to salvation, hath, in order thereunto, predestinated them

unto conformity to Christ, and this order of heaven is never to be reversed; we may as well hope to be saved without Christ, as to be saved without conformity to Christ.

Secondly, The nature of Christ-mystical requires this conformity, and renders it indispensably necessary. Otherwise, the body of Christ must be *heterogeneous*; of a nature different from the head; and how monstrous, and uncomely, would this be? This would represent Christ to the world in an image, or idea, much like that, Dan. ii. 32, 33. "The head of fine gold, the "breast and arms of silver, the thighs of brass, the legs of iron, "the feet part of iron, and part of clay." Christ, the head, is pure and holy, and therefore very unsuitable to sensual, and earthly members. And therefore the apostle, in his description of Christ-mystical, describes the members of Christ (as they ought to be) of the same nature, and quality with the head, 2 Cor. xv. 48, 49. "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly; and as we have born the image of the earthy, so we "shall also bear the image of the heavenly." That image, or resemblance of Christ, which shall be complete, and perfect, after the resurrection, must be begun in its first draught here, by the work of regeneration.

Thirdly, This resemblance, and conformity to Christ, appears necessary from the communion, which all believers have with Christ, in the same spirit of grace, and holiness. Believers are called Christ's *fellows*, or copartners, Psal. xlv. 7. from their participation with him of the same spirit; as it is 1 Thes. iv. 8. God giveth the same spirit unto us, which he more plentifully poured out upon Christ. Now where the same spirit, and principle is, there the same fruits, and operations must be produced, according to the proportions, and measures of the spirit of grace communicated; and this reason is farther enforced, by the very design, and end of God, in the infusion of the Spirit of grace; For it is plain, from Ezek. xxxvi. 27. that practical holiness, and obedience, is the scope, and design, of that infusion of the Spirit. The very innate property of the Spirit of God, in men, is to elevate their minds, and set their affections upon heavenly things, to purge their hearts from earthly dross, and fit them for a life of holiness, and obedience: Its nature, also, is assimilating, and changeth them, in whom it is, into the same image with Jesus Christ, their heavenly head, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

Fourthly, The necessity of this imitation of Christ may be argued, from the design, and end of Christ's exhibition to the world, in a body of flesh. For though we detest that doctrine of the Socinians, which makes the exemplary life of Christ to

be the whole end of his incarnation; yet we must not run so far from an error, as to lose a precious truth. We say, the satisfaction of his blood was a main, and principal end of his incarnation, according to Mat. xx. 28. We affirm, also, that it was a great design, and end of the incarnation of Christ, to set before us a pattern of holiness, for our imitation: For so speaks the apostle, 1 Pet. ii. 21. "He hath left us an example, "that we should follow his steps." And this example of Christ greatly obliges believers to his imitation. Phil. ii. 5. "Let this "mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus."

Fifthly, Our imitation of Christ, is one of those great articles which every man is to subscribe, whom Christ will admit into the number of his disciples. Luke xiv. 27. "Whosoever doth "not come after me, cannot be my disciple." And again, John xii. 26. "If any man serve me, let him follow me." To this condition we have submitted, if we be sincere believers; and therefore are strictly bound to the imitation of Christ, not only by God's *command*, but by their own *consent*. But if we profess interest in Christ, when our hearts never consented to follow, and imitate his example; then are we self-deceiving hypocrites, wholly disagreeing from the scripture character of believers, Rom. viii. 1. They that are Christ's, being there described to be such as walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And Gal. v. 25. "If we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit.

Sixthly, The honour of Christ necessitates the conformity of Christians to his example, else what way is there left to stop detracting mouths, and vindicate the name of Christ from the reproaches of the world? How can wisdom be justified of her children, except it be this way? By what means shall we cut off occasion from such as desire occasion, but by regulating our lives by Christ's example? The world hath eyes to see what we *practise*; as well as ears to hear what we *profess*: Therefore either shew the consistency betwixt your profession, and practice, or you can never hope to vindicate the name, and honour of the Lord Jesus. The uses follow; for,

1. Information.
2. Exhortation.
3. Consolation.

First use, for information.

Infer. 1. *If all that profess interest in Christ, be strictly bound to imitate his holy example; then it follows, that religion is very unjustly charged, by the world, with the scandals, and evils of them that profess it.* Nothing can be more unjust and irrational, if we consider,

Firſt, That the Chriſtian religion ſeverely cenſures looſe, and ſcandalous actions, in all profeſſors, and therefore is not to be cenſured for them. 'Tis abſurd to condemn religion, for what itſelf condemns: looſeneſs no way flows from the principles of Chriſtianity, but is moſt oppoſite, and contrary to it. Tit. ii. 11, 12. "For the grace of God that bringeth ſalvation, hath "appeared to all men; teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs, "and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and "godly, in this preſent world."

Secondly, It is an argument of the excellency of Chriſtian religion, that even wicked men, themſelves, covet the name, and profeſſion of it, though they only cloak, and cover their evils under it. I confeſs it is a great abuſe of ſuch an excellent thing as religion is; but yet, if it had not an awful reverence paid it, by the conſciences of all men, it would never be abuſed to this purpoſe, by hypocrites, as it is.

Thirdly, According to this reaſoning, there can be no religion in the world; for name me that religion which is not ſcandalized by the practices of ſome that profeſs it. So that this practice hath a natural tendency to Atheiſm, and is, no doubt, encouraged by the devil, for that end.

Infer. 2. *If all men forfeit their claim to Chriſt, who endeavour not to imitate him in the holineſs of his life, then how ſmall a number of real Chriſtians are there in the world?* Indeed, if liberal talking, without accurate walking; if common profeſſion, without holy practices, were enough to conſtitute a Chriſtian; then this quarter of the world would abound with Chriſtians: But if Chriſt owns none for ſuch, but thoſe that tread in the ſteps of his example; then the number of real Chriſtians is very ſmall. The generality of men that live under the Chriſtian name, are ſuch as walk after the fleſh, Rom. viii. 2. according to the courſe of this world, they yield their members as inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs unto ſin, Rom. vi. 13. Strict godlineſs is a mere bondage to them; narrow is the way, and few there be that walk therein.

Infer. 3. *What bleſſed times ſhould we all ſee, if true religion did once generally obtain, and prevail in the world!* How would it humble the proud, meeken the paſſionate, and ſpiritualize thoſe that are carnal! The perverſe world charges religion with all the tumults, and diſturbances that are in it; when as nothing in the world, but religion, advanced in the power of it, can heal, and cure theſe *epidemical* evils. O if men were once brought under the power of religion, indeed, to walk after Chriſt in holineſs, obedience, meekneſs, and ſelf-denial; no ſuch miſeries as

these would be heard of among us. Isa. xi. 8, 9. "The suck-
"ing child shall play upon the hole of the asp, and a weaned
"child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den; they shall not
"hurt, nor destroy in all my holy mountain: For the earth shall
"be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the
"sea."

Infer. 4. *Hence it also follows, that real Christians are the sweetest companions.* 'Tis a comfortable thing to walk with them that walk after the example of Christ; the holiness, heavenliness, humility, self-denial, and diligence in obedience, which was in Christ, is, in some measure, to be found in all sincere Christians: They shew forth the virtues of him that calleth them; the graces of the Spirit do more, or less, shine forth in them: And O how endearing, sweet, and engaging, are these things! Upon this very account the apostle invited others into the fellowship of the saints. 1 John i. 3. "That ye may have
"fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Fa-
"ther, and with his Son Christ Jesus." And is it not sweet to have fellowship with them, who have fellowship with Christ? O let all your delights be in the saints, and in the excellent of the earth, who excel in virtue, Psal. xvi. 3. yet, mistake not, there is a great deal of difference betwixt one Christian, and another, and even the best of Christians are sanctified but in part. If there be something sweet, and engaging, there is also, something bitter, and distasteful, in the best of men. If there be something to draw forth your delight, and love; there is, also, something to exercise your pity, and patience. Yet this is most certain, that notwithstanding all their infirmities, and corruptions, they are the best, and sweetest company, this world affords.

Infer. 5. *In a word, if no man's claim to Christ be warranted, but theirs that walk as he walked; how vain, and groundless, then, are the hopes, and expectations of all unsanctified men, who walk after their own lusts?* None are more forward to claim the privileges of religion, than those that reject the duties of it; multitudes hope to be saved by Christ, who yet refuse to be governed by him: But such hopes have no scripture warrant to support them; yea, they have no scripture testimonies against them. 1 Cor. vi. 9. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not
"inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither forni-
"cators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abu-
"sers of themselves with mankind; nor thieves, nor covetous,
"nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the
"kingdom of God." O how many thousand vain hopes are laid

in the duſt, and how many thouſand ſouls are ſentenced to hell by this one ſcripture!

Second uſe, for exhortation.

If this be ſo, it naturally preſſes all the profeſſors of Chriſtianity to ſtrict godlineſs in their converſations, as ever they expect benefit by Chriſt. O profeſſors, be ye not conformed unto this world, but be ye transformed, by the renewing of your minds: Set the example of Chriſt before you, and labour to tread in his ſteps. This is the great buſineſs of religion, the main ſcope of the goſpel. Give me leave, therefore, cloſely to preſs it upon your hearts, by the following motives.

Motive 1. Chriſt hath conformed himſelf to you, by his abaſing incarnation; how reaſonable therefore is it that you conform yourſelves to him in the way of obedience and ſanctification? He came as near to you, as it was poſſible for him to do, ſtrive you therefore to come as near to Chriſt as it is poſſible for you to do: he hath taken your nature upon him, Heb. ii. 14. yea, and with your nature he hath taken your weakneſſes and infirmities, Rom. viii. 3. and not only your natures and your infirmities, but your condition alſo, for he came under the law for your ſakes, Gal. iv. 4. He conformed himſelf to you, though he was infinitely above you, that was his abaſement; do you conform yourſelves to him, who are infinitely beneath him, that will be your advancement: his conformity to you emptied him of his glory, your conformity to him will fill you with glory: he conformed himſelf to you, though you had no obligation upon him; will you not conform yourſelves to him, who lie under infinite obligations ſo to do?

Motive 2. You ſhall be conformed to Chriſt in glory; how reaſonable therefore is it you ſhould now conform yourſelves to him in holineſs? The apoſtle ſaith, 1 John iii. 2. "We ſhall "be like unto him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is:" Yea, not only your ſouls ſhall be like him, but your very bodies, even thoſe vile bodies of yours, "ſhall be changed, that they may be faſhi-"oned like unto his glorious body." How forcible a motive is this to bring men into conformity with Chriſt here! eſpecially, ſeeing our conformity to him in holineſs, is the evidence of our conformity to him in glory, Rom. vi. 5. 2 Pet. iii. 11. O profeſſors, as ever you look to be with Chriſt in glory hereafter, ſee that ye walk after Chriſt's example in holineſs and obedience here.

Motive 3. The conformity of your lives to Chriſt your pattern, is your higheſt excellency in this world: The meaſure

of your grace is to be eſtimated by this rule. The excellency of every creature riſes higher and higher, according as it approaches ſtill nearer and nearer to its original; the more you reſemble Chriſt in grace, the more illuſtrious and reſplendent will your converſations be in true ſpiritual glory.

Motive 4. So far as you imitate Chriſt in your lives, and no farther, you will be beneficial to the world in which you live: ſo far as God helps you to follow Chriſt, you will be helpful to bring others to Chriſt, or build them up in Chriſt; for all men are forbidden by the goſpel to follow you one ſtep farther than you follow Chriſt, 1 Cor. xi. 1. and when you have finiſhed your courſe in this world, the remembrance of your ways will be no further ſweet to others, than they are ways of holineſs and obedience to Chriſt, 1 Cor. iv. 17. If you walk according to the courſe of this world, the world will not be the better for your walking.

Motive 5. To walk as Chriſt walked, is a walk only worthy of a Chriſtian; this is to "walk worthy of the Lord," 1 Theſſ. ii. 12. Col. i. 10. By worthineſs * the apoſtle doth not mean meritoriouſneſs, but comelineſs, or that decorum which befits a Chriſtian: as, when a man walks ſuitably to his place and calling in the world, we ſay he acts like himſelf; ſo, when you walk after Chriſt's pattern, you then act like yourſelves, like men of your character and profeſſion: this is conſonant to your vocation, Eph. iv. 1. "I beſeech you, that you walk worthy of "the vocation wherewith you are called." This walking ſuits with your obligation, 2 Cor. v. 15. for it is to live unto him who died for us. This walking only ſuits with your deſignation, Eph. ii. 10. "For you are created in Chriſt Jeſus unto "good works, which God hath before ordained we ſhould "walk in them." In a word, ſuch walking as this, and ſuch only becomes your expectation, 2 Pet. iii. 14. "Wherefore "[beloved], ſeeing that you look for ſuch things, be diligent, "that ye may be found of him in peace, without ſpot, and "blameleſs."

Motive 6. How comfortable will the cloſe of your life be at death, if you have walked after Chriſt's pattern and example in this world! A comfortable death is ordinarily the cloſe of a holy life, Pſal. xxxvii. 37. "Mark the perfect man, and behold

* The word worthineſs, as uſed in ſcripture, does not always denote an exact proportion of equality between one thing and another, but a certain ſuitableneſs and fitneſs which excludes inconſiſtency. *Davenant on Coloſſ. p.* 25.

"the upright; for the end of that man is peace." A looſe, careleſs life puts many terrible ſtings into death. As worms in the body are bred of the putrefaction there, ſo the worm of conſcience is bred of the moral putrefaction, or corruption that is in our natures and converſations. O then be prevailed with by all theſe conſiderations to imitate Chriſt in the whole courſe, and compaſs of your converſations.

Third uſe, for conſolation.

Laſtly, I would leave a few words of ſupport and comfort to ſuch as ſincerely ſtudy and endeavour, according to the tendency of their new nature, to follow Chriſt's example, but being weak in grace, and meeting with ſtrong temptations, are frequently carried aſide from the holy purpoſes, and deſigns of their honeſt, well-meaning hearts, to the great grief, and diſcouragement of their ſouls. They heartily wiſh and aim at holineſs, and ſay with David, Pſal. cxix. 5. "O that my ways "were directed to keep thy ſtatutes." They follow after exactneſs in holineſs as Paul did, Phil. iii. 12. "If by any means "they might attain it." But finding how ſhort they come, in all things, of the rule and pattern, they mourn as he did, Rom. vii. 24. "O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from "the body of this death?" Well, if this be thy caſe, be not diſcouraged, but hearken to a few words of ſupport and comfort, with which I ſhall cloſe this point.

SUPPORT I.

Such defects in obedience make no flaw in your juſtification: for your juſtification is not built upon your obedience, but upon Chriſt's, Rom. iii. 24. and how incompleat, and defective ſoever you be in yourſelves, yet at the ſame inſtant, "you are "compleat in him which is the head of all principality and "power," Col. ii. 10. Wo to Abraham, Moſes, David, Paul, and the moſt eminent ſaints that ever lived, if their juſtification, and acceptation with God, had depended upon the perfection, and compleatneſs of their own obedince.

SUPPORT. II.

2. Your deep troubles for the defectiveneſs of your obedience, do not argue you to be leſs, but more ſanctified, than thoſe who make no ſuch complaints; for theſe prove you to be better acquainted with your own hearts, than others are; to have a deeper hatred of ſin than others have; and to love God, with a more fervent love than others do; the moſt eminent ſaints have made the bitterest complaints upon this account, Pſal. lxv. 3. Rom. vii. 23, 24.

SUPPORT III.

3. The Lord makes excellent uſes even of your infirmities and failings to do you good, and makes them turn to your unexpected advantage: for, by theſe defects he hides pride from your eyes; he beats you off from ſelf-dependence; he makes you to admire the riches of free grace; he makes you to long more ardently for heaven, and entertain the ſweeter thoughts of death: and doth not the Lord then make bleſſed fruits to ſpring up to you from ſuch a bitter root? O the bleſſed chymiſtry of heaven, to extract ſuch mercies out of ſuch miſeries!

SUPPORT IV.

4. Your bewailed infirmities do not break the bond of the everlaſting covenant. The bond of the covenant holds firm, notwithſtanding your defects and weakneſſes, Jer. xxxii. 40. "Iniquities prevail againſt me," ſaith David, yet in the ſame breath he adds, "as for our tranſgreſſions thou ſhalt purge "them away," Pſal. lxv. 3. He is ſtill thy God, thy Father for all this.

SUPPORT V.

5. Though the defects of your obedience are grievous to God, yet your deep ſorrows for them are well-pleaſing in his eyes, Pſal. li. 17. "The ſacrifices of God are a broken ſpirit, a "broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe." Ephraim was never a more pleaſant child to his father, than when he moaned himſelf, and ſmote upon his thigh as thou doſt, Jer. xxxi. 20. Your ſins grieve him, but your ſorrows pleaſe him.

SUPPORT VI.

6. Though God have left many defects to humble you, yet he hath given many things to comfort you. This is a comfort that the deſire of thy ſoul is to God, and to the remembrance of his name. This is a comfort, that thy ſins are not thy delight as once they were; but thy ſhame and ſorrow. This is a comfort, that thy caſe is not ſingular; but, more or leſs, the ſame complaints and ſorrows are found in all gracious ſouls through the world; and, to ſay all in one word, this is the comfort above all comforts, that the time is at hand, in which all theſe defects, infirmities, and failings ſhall be done away, 1 Cor. xiii. 10. "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is "in part ſhall be done away."

For ever bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.

And thus I have finiſhed the third general uſe of examination, whereby every man is to try his intereſt in Chriſt, and

diſcern whether ever Chriſt hath been effectually applied to his ſoul. That which remains is

An uſe of Lamentation.

Wherein the miſerable and moſt wretched ſtate of all thoſe to whom Jeſus Chriſt is not effectually applied, will be yet more particularly diſcovered, and bewailed.

* *

SERMON XXXI.

Of the State of Spiritual Death, and the Miſery thereof.

Eph. v. 14. *Wherefore he ſaith, Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee light.*

THIS ſcripture repreſents unto us the miſerable, and lamentable ſtate of the unregenerate, as being under the power of ſpiritual death, which is the cauſe, and inlet of all other miſeries. From hence, therefore, I ſhall make the firſt diſcovery of the woful, and wretched ſtate of them that apply not Jeſus Chriſt to their own ſouls.

The ſcope of the *apoſtle* in this *context*, is to preſs believers to a circumſpect, and holy life; to "walk as children of light." This exhortation is laid down in ver. 8. and preſſed by divers arguments in the following verſes.

Firſt, From the tendency of holy principles, unto holy fruits and practice, ver. 9, 10.

Secondly, From the convincing efficacy of practical godlineſs, upon the conſciences of the wicked, ver. 11, 12, 13. It awes, and convinces their conſciences.

Thirdly, From the co-incidence of ſuch a converſation with the great deſign, and drift of the ſcriptures; which is to awaken men, by regeneration, out of that ſpiritual ſleep, or rather death, which ſin hath caſt them into: and this is the argument of the text, *Wherefore he ſaith, Awake thou that ſleepeſt*, &c. There is ſome difficulty in the reference of theſe words. Some think it is to Iſa. xxvi. 19. "Awake and ſing ye that dwell in "the duſt." Others to Iſa. lx. 1. "Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light "is come," *&c.* But moſt probably, the words neither refer to this, or that particularly, but to the drift and ſcope of the whole ſcriptures, which were inſpired, and written upon this great deſign, to awaken, and quicken ſouls out of the ſtate of

ſpiritual death. And in them we are to conſider theſe three things, more diſtinctly, and particularly.

1. The miſerable ſtate of the unregenerate; they are *aſleep and dead.*

2. Their duty; which is to "awake, and ſtand up from the "dead."

3. The power enabling them thereunto; "Chriſt ſhall give "thee light."

Firſt, The miſerable ſtate of the unregenerate, repreſented under the notions of *ſleep*, and *death*; both expreſſions intending one and the ſame thing, though with ſome variety of notion. The Chriſtleſs, and unregenerate world is in a deep ſleep; a ſpirit of ſlumber, ſenſeleſneſs, and ſecurity is fallen upon them, though they lie expoſed immediately to eternal wrath and miſery, ready to drop into hell every moment. Juſt as man that is faſt aſleep in a houſe on fire, and whilſt the conſuming flames are round about him, his fancy is ſporting itſelf in ſome pleaſant dream; this is a very lively reſemblance of the unregenerate ſoul. But yet he that ſleeps hath the principle of life entire in him, though his ſenſes be bound, and the actions of life ſuſpended by ſleep. Leſt therefore we ſhould think it is only ſo with the unregenerate, the expreſſion is deſignedly varied, and thoſe that were ſaid to be *aſleep*, are poſitively affirmed to be *dead*; on purpoſe to inform us that it is not a ſimple *ſuſpenſion* of the acts, and exerciſe, but a total *privation*, of the principle of ſpiritual life, which is the miſery of the unregenerate.

Secondly, We have here the duty of the unregenerate, which is to "awake out of ſleep, and ariſe from the dead." This is their great concernment: no duty in the world is of greater neceſſity and importance to them. "Strive (ſaith Chriſt) to enter in "at the ſtrait gate," Luke xiii. 24. And the order of theſe duties is very natural. Firſt awake, then ariſe. Startling, and rouſing convictions make way for ſpiritual life; till God awake us by convictions of our miſery, we will never be perſuaded to ariſe, and move towards Chriſt for remedy and ſafety.

Thirdly, But you will ſay, if unregenerate men be dead men, to what purpoſe is it to perſuade them to ariſe and ſtand up: The very exhortation ſuppoſes ſome powers or ability in the unregenerate: elſe vain are they commanded to ariſe *. This

* Though the words ſeem to import a willingneſs firſt to awake and riſe, and then to be enlightened, yet we are to underſtand, that it is by the efficacy of Chriſt's light that the ſinner is made to awake and riſe. *Roll. on the place.*

difficulty is ſolved in this very text, though the duty is ours, yet the power is God's. God commands that in his word, which only his grace can perform. "Chriſt ſhall give thee light." Popiſh commentators would build the tower of free-will upon this ſcripture, by a very weak argument, drawn from the order wherein theſe things are here expreſſed; which is but a weak foundation to build upon, for it is very uſual in ſcripture to put the effect before, and the cauſe after, as it is here, ſo in Iſa. xxvi. 19. "Awake and ſing, ye that dwell in the duſt." But I will not here intangle my diſcourſe with that controverſy, that which I aim at is plain in the words, *viz.*

Doct. That all Chriſtleſs ſouls are under the power of ſpiritual death; they are in the ſtate of the dead.

Multitudes of teſtimonies are given in ſcripture to this truth; Eph. ii. 1, 5. "You hath he quickened who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins." Col. ii. 13. "And you being dead in your ſins, and the uncircumciſion of your fleſh, hath he quickened together with him;" with many other places of the ſame importance. But the method in which I ſhall diſcourſe this point will be this:

Firſt, I will ſhew you in what ſenſe Chriſtleſs, and unregenerate men are ſaid to be dead.

Secondly, What the ſtate of ſpiritual death is.

Thirdly, How it appears that all unregenerate men are in this ſad ſtate. And then apply it.

Firſt, In what ſenſe are Chriſtleſs, and unregenerate men ſaid to be dead men.

To open this, we muſt know there is a three-fold death, *viz.*

1. Natural.
2. Spiritual.
3. Eternal.

Natural death is nothing elſe but the privation of the principle of natural life, or the ſeparation of the ſoul from the body, James ii. 26. "The body without the ſpirit is dead." Spiritual death is the privation of the principle of ſpiritual life, or the want and abſence of the quickening Spirit of God in the ſoul; the ſoul is the life of the body, and Chriſt is the life of the ſoul; the abſence of the ſoul is death to the body, and the abſence, or want of Chriſt is death to the ſoul. Eternal death is the ſeparation both of body and ſoul from God, which is the miſery of the damned. Now chriſtleſs, and unregenerate men are not dead in the firſt ſenſe; they are naturally alive though they are dead while they live: nor are they yet dead in the laſt ſenſe, eternally ſeparated from God, by an irrevocable ſentence

as the damned are; but they are dead in the ſecond ſenſe; they are ſpiritually dead, whilſt they are naturally alive; and this ſpiritual death is the fore-runner of eternal death. Now ſpiritual death is put in ſcripture in oppoſition of a two-fold ſpiritual life, *viz.*

1. The life of juſtification.
2. The life of ſanctification.

Spiritual death, in oppoſition to the life of juſtification, is nothing elſe but the guilt of ſin bringing us under the ſentence of death. Spiritual death, in oppoſition to the life of ſanctification, is the pollution, or dominion of ſin. In both theſe ſenſes, unregenerate men are dead men; but it is the laſt which I am properly concerned to ſpeak to in this place: and therefore,

Secondly, Let us briefly conſider what this ſpiritual death is, which, as before was hinted, is the abſence of the quickening Spirit of Chriſt from the ſoul of any man. That ſoul is a dead ſoul, into which the Spirit of Chriſt is not infuſed in the work of regeneration; and all its works are dead works, as they are called, Heb. ix. 14. For, look how it is with the damned, they live, they have ſenſe and motion, and an immortality in all theſe; yet becauſe they are eternally ſeparated from God, the life which they live, deſerves not the name of life, but it is every where in ſcripture ſtiled death: ſo the unregenerate, they are naturally alive; they eat, and drink, they buy, and ſell, they talk, and laugh, they rejoice in the creatures; and many of them ſpend their days in pleaſures, and then go down to the grave. This is the life they live, but yet the ſcripture rather calls it death than life; becauſe though they live, yet it is without God in the world, Eph. ii. 12. though they live, yet it is a life alienated from the life of God, Eph. iv. 18. And therefore while they remain naturally alive, they are in ſcripture ſaid "to remain in death," 1 John iii. 14. and to be "dead while "they live," 1 Tim. v. 6. And there is great reaſon why a Chriſtleſs, an unregenerate ſtate, ſhould be repreſented in ſcripture under the notion of death; for there is nothing in nature which more aptly repreſents that miſerable ſtate of the ſoul, than natural death doth. The dead ſee, and diſcern nothing; and the natural man perceiveth not the things that are of God. The dead have no beauty, or deſireableneſs in them; "Bury my "dead, (ſaid Abraham,) out of my ſight:" neither is there any ſpiritual lovelineſs in the unregenerate. True it is, ſome of them have ſweet natural qualities, and moral excellencies, which are engaging things; but theſe are ſo many flowers, deck-

ing and adorning a dead corpſe. The dead are objects of pity, and great lamentation: men uſe to mourn for the dead, Eccl. xii. 5. "Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go a-"bout the ſtreets." But unregenerate, and Chriſtleſs ſouls, are much more the objects of pity and lamentation. How are all the people of God (eſpecially thoſe that are naturally related to them) concerned to mourn over them, and for them, as Abraham did for Iſhmael, Gen. xvii. 18. "O that Iſhmael might "live before thee." Upon theſe, and many other accounts, the ſtate of unregeneracy is repreſented to us in the notion of death.

Thirdly, And that this is the ſtate of all Chriſtleſs, and unſanctified perſons, will, undeniably, appear two ways.

1. The cauſes of ſpiritual life have not wrought upon them.

2. The effects and ſigns of ſpiritual life, do not appear in them; and therefore they are in the ſtate, and under the power, of ſpiritual death.

Firſt, The cauſes of ſpiritual life have not wrought upon them. There are two cauſes of ſpiritual life,

1. Principal, and internal.

2. Subordinate, and external.

The principal, internal cauſe of ſpiritual life, is the regenerating Spirit of Chriſt, Rom. viii. 2. "The law of the Spirit of "life in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made me free from the law of ſin and "death." It is the Spirit, as a regenerating Spirit, that unites us with Chriſt, in whom all ſpiritual life originally is, John v. 25, 26. "Verily, I ſay unto you, that the hour is coming, and "now is, when the dead ſhall hear the voice of the Son of God: "and they that hear, ſhall live: For as the Father hath life in "himſelf, ſo hath he given to the Son to have life in himſelf." As all the members of the natural body receive animation, ſenſe, and motion, by their union with their natural head; ſo all believers, the members of Chriſt, receive ſpiritual life and animation by their union with Chriſt their myſtical head, Eph. iv. 15, 16. Except we come to him, and be united with him in the way of faith, we can have no life in us, John v. 40. "Ye "will not come unto me that ye may have life." Now the Spirit of God hath yet exerted no regenerating, quickening influences, nor begotten any ſpecial ſaving faith in natural, unſanctified men; whatever he hath done for them in the way of natural, or ſpiritual common gifts, yet he hath not quickened them with the life of Chriſt. And as for the ſubordinate external means of life, *viz.* the preaching of the goſpel, which is the in-

ſtrument of the Spirit in this glorious work, and is therefore called, *The word of life*, Phil. ii. 16. This word hath not yet been made a regenerating quickening word to their ſouls. Poſſibly it hath enlightened them, and convinced them: it hath wrought upon their minds in the way of common illumination, and upon their conſciences, in the way of conviction, but not upon their hearts and wills, by way of effectual converſion. To this day the Lord hath not given them an heart opening itſelf, in the way of faith, to receive Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, The effects and ſigns of ſpiritual life, do not appear in them: For,

Firſt, They have no feeling, or ſenſe of miſery, and danger. I mean, no ſuch ſenſe as throughly awakens them to apply Chriſt their remedy. That ſpiritual judgment lies upon them, Iſa. vi. 9, 10. "And he ſaid, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, "but underſtand not; and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not; "make the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy, and "ſhut their eyes."

Secondly, They have no ſpiritual motions towards Chriſt, or after things that are ſpiritual; all the arguments in the world cannot perſuade their wills to move one ſtep towards Chriſt in the way of faith, John v. 40. *Ye will not come unto me:* Were there a principle of ſpiritual life in their ſouls, they would move Chriſt-ward and heaven-ward, John iv. 14. It would be in them a well of water ſpringing up into eternal life. The natural tendency of the ſpiritual life is upward.

Thirdly, The unregenerate have no appetite unto ſpiritual food; they ſavour not things that are ſpiritual; they can go from week to week, and from year to year, all their life-time, without any communion betwixt God and their ſouls, and feel no need of it, nor any hungerings nor thirſtings after it; which could never be, if a principle of ſpiritual life were in them; for then they would "eſteem the words of God's mouth more than "their neceſſary food," Job xxx. 12.

Fourthly, They have no heat, or ſpiritual warmth, in their affections to God, and things above; their hearts are as cold as a ſtone to ſpiritual objects. They are heated, indeed, by their luſts, and affections to the world, and the things of the world: but O how cold, and dead are they towards Jeſus Chriſt, and ſpiritual excellencies.

Fifthly, They breathe not ſpiritually, therefore they live not ſpiritually: were there a ſpiritual principle of life in them, their ſouls would breathe after God in ſpiritual prayer, *Acts* ix. 11. "Behold he prayeth." The lips of the unregenerate may

move in prayer, but their hearts and desires do not breathe and pant after God.

Sixthly, They have no cares, or fears, for self-preservation, which is always the effect of life; the poorest flie, or silliest worm, will shun danger: the wrath of God hangs over them in the threatenings, but they tremble not at it: hell is but a little before them; they are upon the very precipice of eternal ruin, yet will use no means to avoid it. How plain, therefore, is this sad case, which I have undertaken here to demonstrate, *viz.* that Christless and unregenerate souls are dead souls? The uses follow.

Infer. 1. *If all Christless and unregenerate souls be dead souls, then how little pleasure can Christians take in the society of the unregenerate?*

Certainly, it is no pleasure for the living to converse among the dead. It was a cruel torment, invented by Mezentius the tyrant, to tie a dead and living man together. The pleasure of society arises from the harmony of spirits, and the hopes of mutual enjoyment in the world to come; neither of which can sweeten the society of the godly with the wicked in this world *. It is true, there is a necessary civil converse which we must have with the ungodly here; or else, (as the apostle speaks), we must go out of the world. There are also duties of relation, which must be faithfully and tenderly paid, even to the unregenerate: but certainly, where we have our free election, we shall be much wanting both to our duty and comfort, if we make not the people of God our chosen companions. Excellently to this purpose speaks a modern author †, "Art thou a godly master? "when thou takest a servant into thine house, chuse for God, "as well as thyself.—A godly servant is a greater blessing than "we think on: he can work, and set God on work also for his "master's good, Gen. xxiv. 12. "O Lord God of my master A- "braham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew "kindness unto my master." And sure he did his master as much "service by his prayer, as by his prudence, in that journey.— "Holy David observed, while he was at Saul's court, the mis- "chief of having wicked and ungodly servants, (for with such

* As diseases bred in one part of the body, use to spread their pernicious influence to the other members which are near to that part; so the vices of the wicked use to infect those that have intercourse with them. *Tertullian against Valentine.*

† Gurnal's Christian Armour, part 2. p. 256, 257.

" was that unhappy king ſo compaſſed, that David compares " his court to the prophane and barbarous Heathens, among " whom there was ſcarce more wickedneſs to be found, Pſal. " cxx. 6. " Wo is me, that I ſojourn, in Meſhech, that I dwell " in the tents of Kedar;" *i. e.* among thoſe who were as pro- " digiouſly wicked as any there); and no doubt, but this made " this gracious man, in his baniſhment, before he came to the " crown, (having ſeen the evil of a diſordered houſe), to reſolve " what he would do when God ſhould make him the head of " ſuch a royal family, Pſal. ci. 7. " He that worketh deceit, ſhall " not dwell within my houſe; he that telleth lies, ſhall not " tarry in my ſight."

" Art thou godly? ſhew thyſelf ſo in the choice of huſband " or wife. I am ſure, if ſome, (and thoſe godly ones), could " bring no other teſtimonials for their godlineſs, than the care " they have taken in this particular, it might juſtly be called in- " to queſtion, both by themſelves and others. There is no one " thing that gracious perſons, (even thoſe recorded in ſcripture " as well as others), have ſhewn their weakneſs, yea, given of- " fence and ſcandal more in, than in this particular, " The ſons " of God ſaw that the daughters of men were fair," Gen. vi. 2. " One would have thought, that the ſons of God ſhould have " looked for grace in the heart, rather than beauty in the face; " but we ſee, even they ſometimes turn in at the faireſt ſign, " without much enquiring what grace is to be found dwelling " within." Look to the rule, O Chriſtian, if thou wilt keep the power of holineſs, that is clear as a ſun-beam written in the ſcripture, " Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," 2 Cor. vi. 14.

Infer. 2. *How great and wholly ſupernatural, marvellous and wonderful is that change which regeneration makes upon the ſouls of men!* It is a change from death to life, Luke xv. 24. " This " my ſon was dead and is alive again." Regeneration is life from the dead; the moſt excellent life from the moſt terrible death: it is the life of God re-inſpired into a ſoul alienated from it by the power of ſin, Eph. iv. 18. There are two ſtupenduous changes made upon the ſouls of men, which juſtly challenge higheſt admiration, *viz.*

1. That from ſin to grace.
2. From grace to glory.

The change from grace to glory is acknowledged by all, and that juſtly, to be a wonderful change for God to take a poor creature out of the ſociety of ſinful men; yea, from under the burden of many ſinful infirmities, which made him groan from day

to day in this world; and in a moment to make him a complete and perfect ſoul, ſhining in the beauties of holineſs, and filling him, as a veſſel of glory, with the unſpeakable and unconceivable joys of his preſence; to turn his groanings into triumphs, his ſighings into ſongs of praiſe; this, I ſay, is marvellous, and yet the former change, from ſin to grace, is no way inferior to it, nay, in ſome reſpect, beyond it; for the change which glory makes upon the regenerate is but a gradual change, but the change which regeneration makes upon the ungodly is a ſpecifical change. Great and admirable is this work of God; and let it for ever be marvellous in our eyes.

Infer. 3. *If unregenerate ſouls be dead ſouls, what a fatal ſtroke doth death give to the bodies of all unregenerate men?* A ſoul dead in ſin, and a body dead by virtue of the curſe for ſin, and both ſoul and body remaining for ever under the power of eternal death, is ſo full and perfect a miſery, as that nothing can be added to make it more miſerable: it is the comfort of a Chriſtian, that he can ſay, when death comes, *Non omnis moriar*, I ſhall not wholly die; there is a life I live, which death cannot touch. Rom. viii. 13. "The body is dead "becauſe of ſin; but the ſpirit is life, becauſe of righteouſneſs." Bleſſed and holy is he, that hath part in the firſt reſurrection: on ſuch the ſecond death hath no power. As death takes the believer from amidſt many ſorrows and troubles, and brings him to the viſion of God, to the general aſſembly of all the perfected ſaints, to a ſtate of complete freedom and full ſatisfaction; ſo it drags the unregenerate from all his ſenſitive delights and comforts, to the place of torment: it buries the dead ſoul out of the preſence of God for ever: it is the king of terrors, a ſerpent with a deadly ſting, to every man that is out of Chriſt.

Infer. 4. *If every unregenerate ſoul be a dead ſoul, how ſad is the caſe of hypocrites and temporary believers, who are twice dead?* Theſe are thoſe curſed trees, of which the apoſtle Jude ſpeaks, Jude ver. 12. "Trees whoſe fruit withereth, without fruit, "twice dead, plucked up by the roots." The apoſtle alludes unto dying trees; trees that are dying, the firſt time, in the ſpring, then they fade, decay, and caſt of their leaves, when other trees are fragrant and flouriſhing: but from this firſt death they are ſometimes recovered, by pruning, dreſſing, or watering the roots; but if in autumn, they decay again, which is the critical and *climacterical* times of trees, to diſcover whether their diſeaſe be mortal or not; if then they wither and decay the ſecond time, the fault is *ab intra*, the root is rotten, there is no hope

of it; the husbandman bestows no more labour about it, except it be to root it up, for fewel to the fire. Just thus stands the case with false and hypocritical professors, who though they were still under the power of spiritual death, yet, in the beginning of their profession, they seemed to be alive; they shewed the world the fragrant leaves of a fair profession, many hopeful buddings, of affection towards spiritual things were seen in them, but, wanting a root of regeneration, they quickly began to wither and cast their untimely fruit. However, by the help of ordinances, or some touzing and awakening providences, they seem to recover themselves again; but all will not do, the fault is *ab intra*, from the want of a good root, and therefore, at last, they who were always *once dead*, for want of a principle of regeneration, are now become *twice dead*, by the withering and decay of their vain profession. Such trees are prepared for the severest flames in hell, Matth. xxiv. 51. their portion is the saddest portion allotted for any of the sons of death. Therefore the apostle Peter tells us, 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21. "For if, after they have "escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge "of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entang-"led therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them "than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to "have known the way of righteousness, than after they have "known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto "them." Double measures of wrath seem to be prepared for them that die this double death.

Infer. 5. *If this be so, then unregenerate persons deserve the greatest lamentations.* And were this truth heartily believed, we could not but mourn over them, with the most tender compassion, and hearty sorrow. If our husbands, wives, or children are dying a natural death, how are our hearts rent in pieces, with pity and sorrow for them? What cries, tears, and wringing of hands, discover the deep sense we have of their misery! O Christians, is all the love you have for your relations spent upon their bodies? Are their souls of no value in your eyes? Is spiritual death no misery? Doth it not deserve a tear? The Lord open your eyes, and duly affect our hearts with spiritual death, and soul miseries.

Consider, my friends, and let it move your bowels, (if there be bowels of affection in you), whilst they remain spiritually dead, they are useless, and wholly unserviceable unto God in the world, as to any special and acceptable service unto him, 2 Tim. ii. 21, they are incapable of all spiritual comforts from God; they cannot taste the least sweetness in Christ, in duties, or in promises,

Rom. viii. 6. they have no beauty in their ſouls, how comely ſoever their bodies are; it is grace, and nothing but grace, that beautifies the inner man, Ezek. xvi. 6, 7. The dead have neither comfort nor beauty in them: they have no hope to be with God in glory; for the life of glory is begun in grace, Phil. i. 6. their graves muſt be ſhortly made, to be buried out of the ſight of God, for ever, in the loweſt hell, the pit digged by juſtice for all that are ſpiritually dead: the dead muſt be buried. Can ſuch conſiderations as theſe draw no pity from your ſouls, nor excite your endeavours for their regeneration? then it is to be feared your ſouls are dead as well as theirs. O pity them, pity them, and pray for them; in this caſe only, prayers for the dead are our duty: who knows, but, at the laſt, God may hear your cries, and you may ſay with comfort, as he did, "This my ſon "was dead, but is alive; was loſt, but is found; and they be-"gan to be merry," Luke. xv. 24.

SERMON XXXII.

The Condemnation of Unbelievers, opened and applied.

1 JOHN iii. 18. ——*But he that believeth not, is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

CHRIST having diſcourſed with Nicodemus, in the beginning of this chapter, about the neceſſity of regeneration, proceeds to ſhew, in this following diſcourſe, the reaſon, and ground, why regeneration, and faith, are ſo indiſpenſibly neceſſary, *viz.* becauſe there is no other way to ſet men free from the curſe, and condemnation of the law. The curſe of the law, like the fiery ſerpents in the wilderneſs, hath ſmitten every ſinner with a deadly ſtroke, and ſting, for which there is no cure, but Chriſt lifted up in the goſpel, "as Moſes lifted up the ſerpent in "the wilderneſs," ver. 14. Neither doth Chriſt cure any, but thoſe that, believingly, apply him to their own ſouls. The reſult, and concluſion of all, you have in my text; "He that be-"lieveth in him, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, "is condemned already," *&c.* In this clauſe, which I have pitched upon, we find theſe three parts;

1. The ſin threatened, *viz.* Unbelief.
2. The puniſhment inflicted, *viz.* Condemnation.

3. The immediate relation of the one to the other? "he is "condemned already."

First, Let us take into consideration the sin which is here threatened, *viz. unbelief*; the neglecting, or refusing, of an exalted, and offered Jesus. Unbelief is twofold, *viz.* negative, or positive. *Negative* unbelief, is the sin of the Heathens, who never had the gospel among them, nor the offers of Christ made to them; these cannot believe on him, of whom they have not heard. *Positive* unbelief, is the sin of men and women under the gospel, to whom Christ is actually opened, and offered, by the preaching of the gospel; but they make light of it, and neglect the great salvation: Receive not Christ into their hearts, nor consent to the severe, and self-denying terms upon which he is offered. This is the sin threatened.

Secondly, The punishment inflicted, and that is *condemnation*; a word of deep, and dreadful signification; appearing, in this text, as the hand-writting upon the plaister of the wall unto Belteshazzar, Dan. v. 5. a word, whose deep sense, and emphasis, is fully understood in hell. *Condemnation* is the judgment, or sentence of God, condemning a man to bear the punishment of his eternal wrath for sin; the most terrible of all sentences.

Thirdly, The immediate relation, or respect, this punishment hath to that sin of unbelief. The unbeliever is condemned already, *(i. e.)* he is virtually condemned by the law of God; his *mittimus* is already made for hell; he is condemned, as *a sinner*, by the breach of the first covenant; but that condemnation had never been his ruin, except it had been ratified by the sentence of God, condemning him, as an *unbeliever*, for slighting, and rejecting the grace offered in the second covenant. So that the believer is already, virtually, condemned by both, as he is a sinner, and as he is an unbeliever; as he hath transgressed the law, and as he hath refused the gospel; as he hath contracted sin the moral disease, and refused Christ, the only effectual remedy. He is, virtually, condemned now, and will be, sententially, condemned in the judgment of the great day. Unbelief is his great sin, and condemation is his great misery. Hence the observation will be this:

Doct. *That all unbelievers are presently, and immediately under the just, and dreadful sentence of God's condemnation.* John xii. 48. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my "words, hath one that judgeth him: The word that I "have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John iii. 36. "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see "life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Three things are to be opened in the doctrinal part of this point:

1. What unbelief, or the not receiving of Jesus Christ, is.
2. What condemnation, the punishment of this sin, is.
3. Why this punishment unavoidably follows that sin.

First, What the sin of unbelief, or not receiving Christ, is. By unbelief, we are not here to understand the relics, or remains of that sin in the people of God, which is mixed with their imperfect faith; for there is some unbelief still mingled with faith, in the best hearts: He that can say, "Lord, I believe," hath cause enough to cry out, with tears, "help thou my unbelief." However, this doth not bring the soul under condemnation, or into the state of wrath; the word condemns this unbelief in them, but doth not condemn their persons for this unbelief: But the unbelief here spoken of, is the neglecting, or refusing to take Christ, upon the terms of the gospel, and so is exclusive of the saving act, and effects of faith.

First, It is exclusive of the saving act of faith, which (as hath been already declared) is the due receiving of Christ offered in the gospel, consenting to take him upon his own terms. This, the unbeliever will by no means be persuaded to do; he will be persuaded to accept the promises of Christ, but not to accept the person of Christ: He is willing to accept Christ in part, a divided Christ, but not to accept Christ entirely, in all his offices. He will accept the righteousness of Christ, in conjunction with his own righteousness; but he will not accept the righteousness of Christ, as the sole matter of his justification, exclusive of his own righteousness; he is willing to wear the crown of Christ, but cannot be persuaded to bear the cross of Christ. Thus Christ and unbelievers part upon terms; God will come down no lower, and the unbeliever will come up no higher: God will not alter his terms, and the unbeliever will not alter his resolution; and so Christ is refused, salvation neglected, and in effect the unbeliever chuseth rather to be damned, than to comply with the severe terms of self-denial, mortification, and bearing the cross of Christ. Thus it excludes the saving act of faith.

Secondly, 'Tis exclusive of the saving fruits and effects of faith. Faith produces love to God, but the unbeliever doth not truly love him; "But I know you (saith Christ to unbelievers) "that the love of God is not in you," John v. 42. Faith purifies the heart of a believer, but the hearts of unbelievers are full of all impurity. The believer overcomes the world, the

world overcomes the unbeliever: Faith makes the croſs of Chriſt ſweet and eaſy to the believer, unbelief makes Chriſt, becauſe of the croſs, bitter and diſtaſteful to the unbeliever. Thus unbelief excludes both the ſaving act and fruits of faith, and conſequently bars the ſoul from the ſaving benefits and privileges of Faith, *viz.* Juſtification, and peace with God.

Secondly, Next let us conſider the puniſhment of this ſin, which is condemnation. Condemnation, in the general, is the ſentence of a judge awarding a mulct, or penalty to be inflicted upon the guilty perſon. There is a twofold condemnation;

1. *Reſpectu culpae*, In reſpect of the fault.

2. *Reſpectu poenae*, In reſpect of the puniſhment.

Firſt, Condemnation, with reſpect to the fault, is the caſting off the perſon as guilty of the crime charged upon him: condemnation, with reſpect to the puniſhment, is the ſentencing of the convicted offender to undergo ſuch a puniſhment for ſuch a fault, to bear a penal for a moral evil. This *forenſic* word, *condemnation*, is here applied unto the caſe of a guilty ſinner caſt at the bar of God, where the fact is clearly proved, and the puniſhment righteouſly awarded. Thou art an unbeliever, for this ſin thou ſhalt die eternally. Condemnation, with reſpect to the fault, ſtands oppoſed to juſtification, Rom. v. 16. Condemnation, with reſpect to the puniſhment, ſtands oppoſed to ſalvation, Mark xvi. 16. More particularly,

Firſt, Condemnation is the ſentence of God; the great and terrible God, the omniſcient, omnipotent, ſupreme, and impartial Judge, at whoſe bar the guilty ſinner ſtands. 'Tis the law of God that condemns him now: he hath one that judgeth him, a great and terrible one too. 'Tis a dreadful thing to be condemned at man's bar; but the courts of human judicature, how awful, and ſolemn ſoever they are, are but trifles to this court of heaven, and conſcience, wherein the unbeliever is arraigned, and condemned.

Secondly, 'Tis the ſentence of God adjudging the unbeliever to eternal death, than which, nothing is more terrible. What is a priſon to hell? What is a ſcaffold, and an ax, to "go ye "curſed into everlaſting fire?" What is a gallows, and a halter, to everlaſting burnings?

Thirdly, Condemnation is the final ſentence of God, the ſupreme judge, from whoſe bar and judgment there lies no appeal for the unbeliever, but execution certainly follows condemnation, Luke xix. 27. If man condemn, God may juſtify and ſave: but if God condemn, no man can ſave or deliever. If the *law* caſt a man, as a ſinner, the goſpel may ſave him, as a believer:

But if the gospel cast him, as an unbeliever, a man that finally rejects Jesus Christ, whom it offers to him, all the world cannot save that man. O then what a dreadful word is condemnation! All the evils, and miseries of this life are nothing to it. Put all afflictions, calamities, sufferings, and miseries of this world into one scale, and this sentence of God into the other, and they will be all lighter than a feather.

Thirdly, In the next place, I shall shew you that this punishment, *viz.* condemnation, must unavoidably follow that sin of unbelief. So many unbelieving persons as be in the world, so many condemned persons there are in the world; and this will appear two ways.

1. By considering what unbelief excludes a man from.

2. By considering what unbelief includes a man under.

First, Let us consider what unbelief excludes a man from; and it will be found, that it excludes him from all that may help, and save him. For,

First, It excludes him from the pardon of sin, John viii. 24. "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Now he that dies under the guilt of all his sins, must needs die in a state of wrath, and condemnation for ever. "For the wages of "sin is death," Rom. vi. 23. If a man may be saved without a pardon, then may the unbeliever hope to be saved.

Secondly, Unbelief excludes a man from all the saving benefits that come by the sacrifice, or death of Christ. For if faith be the only instrument that applies, and brings home to the soul the benefits of the blood of Christ, as unquestionably it is; then unbelief must of necessity exclude a man from all those benefits, and consequently leave him in the state of death, and condemnation. Faith is the applying cause, the instrument by which we receive the special saving benefit of the blood of Christ, Rom. v. 25. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." Eph. ii. 8. "By grace are ye saved through "faith." So then, if the unbeliever be acquitted and saved, it must be without the benefit of Christ's death and sacrifice, which is utterly impossible.

Thirdly, Unbelief excludes a man from the saving efficacy, and operation of the gospel, by shutting up the heart against it; and crossing the main drift and scope of it; which is to bring up men to the terms of salvation. To persuade them to believe, this is its great design, the scope of all its commands, 1 John iii. 23. Mark i. 14, 15. John xii. 36. It is the scope of all its promises; they are written to encourage men to believe, John vi.

35, 37. So then, if the unbeliever escape condemnation, it must be in a way unknown to us by the gospel; yea, contrary to the established order therein. For the unbeliever obeyeth not the great command of the gospel, 1 John iii. 17. Nor is he under any one saving promise of it, Gal. iii. 14, 22.

Fourthly, Unbelief excludes a man from union with Christ, faith being the bond of that union, Eph. iii. 17. The unbeliever therefore may as reasonably expect to be saved without Christ, as to be saved without faith. Thus you see what unbelief excludes a man from.

Secondly, Let us next see what guilt and misery unbelief includes men under; and certainly it will be found to be the greatest guilt and misery in the world: For,

First, It is a sin which reflects the greatest dishonour upon God, 1 John vi. 10. "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath "the witness in himself. He that believeth not God, hath made "him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave "of his Son."

Secondly, Unbelief makes a man guilty of the vilest contempt of Christ, and the whole design of redemption managed by him. All the glorious attributes of God were finally manifested in the work of redemption by Christ; therefore the apostle calls him "the wisdom of God, and the power of God," 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. But what doth the careless neglect, and wilful rejection of Christ speak, but the weakness, and folly of that design of redemption by him?

Thirdly, Unbelief includes in it the sorest spiritual judgment that is, or can be inflicted in this world, upon the soul of man: even spiritual blindness, and the fatal darkening of the understanding by Satan, 2 Cor. iv. 4. of which more hereafter.

Fourthly, Unbelief includes a man under the curse, and shuts him up under all the threatnings that are written in the book of God; amongst which, that is an express, and terrible one, Mark xvi. 10. "He that believes not, shall be damned." So that nothing can be more evident than this, that condemnation necessarily follows unbelief. This sin and that punishment, are fastened together with chains of adamant. The uses follow:

Infer. 1. If this be so, then how great a number of persons are, visibly, in the state of condemnation! So many unbelievers, so many condemned men and women. That is a sad complaint of the prophet, Isa. liii. 1. "Who hath believed our report, and "to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" Many there be that talk of faith, and many that profess faith; but they only talk of and profess it: There are but few in the world unto whom

the arm of the Lord hath been revealed, in the work of faith with power. It is put among the great myſteries and wonders of the world, 1 Tim. iii. 16. That Chriſt is believed on in the world. O what a great and terrible day will the day of Chriſt's coming to judgment be, when ſo many millions of unbelievers ſhall be brought to his tribunal to be ſolemnly ſentenced! They are (as my text ſpeaks) *condemned already;* but then that dreadful ſentence will be ſolemnly pronounced by Jeſus Chriſt, whom they have deſpiſed and rejected: Then ſhall that ſcripture be fulfilled, Luke xix. 27. "Theſe mine enemies that would not "that I ſhould reign over them, bring them hither, and ſlay "them before me."

Infer. 2. Hence be informed how great a mercy the leaſt meaſure of ſaving faith is; for the leaſt meaſure of true faith unites the ſoul to Jeſus Chriſt; and then "there is no condemnation "to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus," Rom. viii. 1. Not one ſentence of God againſt them. So acts xiii. 39. "By him all that "believe are juſtified in all things." The weakeſt believer is as free from condemnation, as the ſtrongeſt; the righteouſneſs of Chriſt comes upon all believers, without any difference. Rom. iii. 22. "Even the righteouſneſs of God, which is by faith of "Chriſt Jeſus unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there "is no difference." It is not imputed, as it is in inherent righteouſneſs; one man hath more holineſs than another: The faith that receives the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, may be very different in degrees of ſtrength; but the received righteouſneſs is equal upon all believers: A piece of gold is as much worth in the hand of a child, as it is in the hand of a man. O the exceeding preciouſneſs of ſaving faith!

Infer. 3. How dreadful a ſin is the ſin of unbelief, which brings men under the condemnation of the great God. No ſin ſtartles leſs, or damns ſurer: It is a ſin that doth not affright the conſcience, as ſome other ſins do, but it kills the ſoul more certainly than any of thoſe ſins could do: For, indeed, other ſins could not damn us, were it not for unbelief, which fixes the guilt of them all upon our perſons. This is the condemnation. Unbelief is the ſin, of ſins; and when the Spirit comes to convince men of ſin he begins with this as the capital ſin, John xvi. 9. But more particularly,

Firſt, Eſtimate the evil of unbelief, from its object. It is the ſlighting, and refuſing of the moſt excellent, and wonderful perſon in heaven or earth: the viſion of Chriſt by faith, is the joy of ſaints upon earth; the viſion of Chriſt above, is the happineſs of ſaints in heaven. It is a deſpiſing of him who is altoge-

ther lovely in himself, who hath loved us and given himself for us.

It is a rejecting of the only Mediator betwixt God and man; after the rejecting of whom there remains no sacrifice for sin.

Secondly, Let the evil of unbelief be valued by the offer of Christ to our souls in the gospel: It is one part of the great mystery of godliness, that Christ should be preached to the Gentiles, 1 Tim. iii. 16. That the word of this salvation should be sent to us, Acts xiii. 26. A mercy denied to the fallen angels, and the greatest part of mankind, which aggravates the evil of this sin beyond all imagination. So that in refusing, or neglecting Jesus Christ, is found vile ingratitude, highest contempt of the grace and wisdom of God; and in the event, the loss of the only season, and opportunity of salvation, which is never more to be recovered to all eternity.

Infer. 4. If this be the case of all Unbelievers, it is not to be admired, that souls under the first convictions of their miserable condition, are plunged into such deep distresses of spirit. It is said of them, Acts ii. 27. "That they were pricked at the heart, "and cried out, men and brethren, what shall we do?" And so the jailor, "He came in trembling and astonished, and said, Sirs, "what must I do to be saved?" Certainly, if souls apprehend themselves under the condemnation, and sentence of the great God, all in tears and trembling, their weary days, and restless nights, are not without just cause and reason. Those that never saw their own miserable condition by the light of a clear and full conviction, may wonder to see others so deeply distressed in spirit. They may mis-judge the case, and call it melancholy or madness; but spiritual troubles do not exceed the cause and ground of them; let them be as deep and as great as they will: And, indeed, it is one of the great mysteries of grace and providence; a thing much unknown to men, how such poor souls are supported, from day to day, under such fears and sorrows as are able, in a few hours to break the stoutest spirit in the world. Luther was a man of great natural courage; and yet, when God let in spiritual troubles upon his soul, it is noted of him, *ut nec vox, nec calor, nec sanguis supereſſet*: he had neither voice, nor heat, nor blood appearing in him.

Inf. 5. How groundless and irrational is the mirth and jollity of all carnal and unregenerate men? They feast in their prison, and dance in their fetters. O the madness that is in the hearts of men! If men did but see their *mittimus* made for hell, or believe they are condemned already, it were impossible for them to live at that rate of vanity they do: And is their condition less

dangerous, becauſe it is not underſtood? Surely no; but much more dangerous for that. O poor ſinners, you have found out an effectual way to prevent your preſent troubles; it were well if you could find out a way to prevent your eternal miſery: But it is eaſier for a man to ſtifle conviction, than prevent damnation. Your mirth hath a twofold miſchief in it; it prevents repentance, and increaſeth your future torment. O what an hell will your hell be, who drop into it out of all the ſenſitive, and ſinful pleaſures of this world! If ever man may ſay of mirth, that it is mad; and of laughter, what doth it! He may ſay ſo in this caſe.

Infer. 6. Laſtly, what cauſe have they to rejoice, admire, and praiſe the Lord, to eternity, who have a well-grounded confidence, that they are freed from God's condemnation? "O give thanks to the Father, who hath delivered you from "the power of darkneſs, and tranſlated you into the kingdom "of his dear Son," Col. i. 13. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for if you be freed from condemnation, you are out of Satan's power, he hath no more any dominion over you. The power of Satan, over men, comes in by virtue of their condemnation, as the power of the *jaylor*, or *executioner*, over the bodies of condemned priſoners doth, Heb. ii. 14. If you be freed from condemnation, the ſting of death ſhall never touch you; for the ſting of death ſmites the ſouls of men with a deadly ſtroke, only by virtue of God's condemnatory ſentence. 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56. "The ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the law." If you be freed from condemnation now, you ſhall ſtand with comfort, and boldneſs, at the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, in the great day; and verily in this thing is the love of God perfected, 1 John iv. 17. O it is a privilege in which the grace, mercy, and love of God, ſhine forth as clearly as the ſun, when it ſhineth in its full ſtrength. And certainly you will find cauſe to lie at the feet of God, aſtoniſhed, and overwhelmed with the ſenſe of this mercy, when you ſhall find yourſelves free from the condemnation of God, whilſt many others, as good as you were, are ſtill under condemnation. Yea, yourſelves freed, and many of your ſuperiors in the world ſtill under the curſe, 1 Cor. i. 26. Yea, yourſelves freed and others, that ſat under the ſame means of grace, and had the ſame external advantages you had, ſtill in chains, 2 Cor. ii. 16. O brethren! This is a marvellous deliverance; look on it which way you will, your ranſom is paid, and not a penny of it by you; it coſt you nothing to procure your pardon; your pardon is full, and not one ſin excepted out of it that you ever committed. You are freed,

and Jesus Christ condemned in your stead, to procure your discharge; your pardon is sealed in his blood, and that for ever; so that you shall never any more come into condemnation. "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent "me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condem-"nation, but is passed from death to life," John v. 24.

Let them that are so delivered, spend their days on earth in praise, and chearful obedience; and, when they die, let them not shrink away from death, nor be afraid to take it by the cold hand, it can do them no harm. Yea, let them close their dying lips with, *Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ.*

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SERMON XXXIII.

Of the Aggravation of the sin, and Punishment of Unbelief under the light of the Gospel.

JOHN iii. 19. *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

OUT of the foregoing verse it was fully proved in our last sermon, that all Christless, and unregenerate men, are no better than dead men, being *condemned already.* Our Saviour proceeds in this verse to aggravate the misery of those that refuse, and despise him; yet farther, and to let them know, that those who remain in unbelief, and the state of unregeneracy, must expect some greater, and sorer wrath than other men; not only a simple condemnation, but an aggravated, and peculiar condemnation. "This is the condemnation, that light is "come," *&c.*

In the words, we find these three parts.

1. The aggravation of sin, by the abuse of gospel-light, "Light is come," *&c.*

2. The aggravation of misery, in proportion to that abuse of light, "This is the condemnation."

3. The cause, and occasion, drawing men into this sin and misery, "Because their deeds were evil."

First, We have here the aggravation of sin, by the abuse of gospel-light, "Light is come." By light we are to understand the knowledge, discovery, and manifestation of Christ, and re-

demption by him in the gospel. He is the sun of righteousness, that arises in the gospel upon the nations, Mal. iv. 1. When he came in the flesh, then did "the day-spring *from* on high "visit us," Luke i. 78. And the light may be said to come two ways; either,

First, In the means by which it is conveyed to us; or, *Secondly*, in the efficacy of it upon our minds, when it actually shines in our souls. Light may come among a people in the means, and yet they actually remain in darkness all the while. As it is in nature; the sun may be up and a very glorious morning far advanced, whilst many thousands are drowzing upon their beds, with their curtains drawn about them. Light, in the *means*, we may call *potential light*. Light, in the *mind*, we may call *actual light*. It is but seldom that light comes in the means, and continues long among men, but some light must needs actually shine into their souls also; but this actual light is twofold.

1. Common, and intellectual only, to *conviction*; or,

2. Special, and efficacious light, bringing the soul to Christ, by real *conversion*, called in 2 Cor. iv. 6. ——God "shining in-"to the heart."

Wherever light comes, in this last sense, it is impossible that such men should prefer darkness before it: But it may come in the means, yea, it may actually shine into the consciences of men, by those means, and convince them of their sins, and yet men may hate it, and chuse darkness rather than light. And this is the sense of this place, light was come, in the gospel-dispensation among them; yea, it had shined into many of their consciences, galled, and reproved them for sin; but they hated it, and had rather be without such a troublesome inmate. In a word, by the coming of light, we are here to understand a more clear, and open manifestation of Christ by the gospel than ever was made to the world before. For we are not to think that there was no light in the world till Christ came, and the gospel was published in the world by the apostles ministry. For Abraham saw Christ's day, John viii. 56. and all the faithful, before Christ, saw the promises (*i. e.*) their accomplishment in Christ afar off, Heb. xi. 13. For it was with Christ, the Sun of righteousness, as it is with the natural sun, "which illuminates "the hemisphere before it actually rises, or shews its body above "the horizon *;" but when it rises and shews itself, the light

* *Sol nondum conspectus illuminat orbem.*

is much clearer; so it was in this case. The greater, therefore, was their sin, that rebelled against it, and preferred darkness to light; this was their sin, with its fearful aggravation.

Secondly, In a most just proportion to this sin, we have here the aggravated condemnation of them who sinned against such clear gospel-light: "This is the condemnation," this is the judgment of all judgments, the greatest, and most intolerable judgment; a severer sentence of condemnation than ever did pass against any others that sinned in the times of ignorance and darkness; they live and die impenitent, and unregenerate, how few soever the means of salvation have been which they have enjoyed, must be condemned; yea, the Pagan world, who have no more but natural light to help them, will be condemned by that light; but "this is the condemnation," (*i. e.*) such sinning as this is the cause of the greatest condemnation, and sorest punishment, as it is called, Heb. x. 19.

Thirdly, The cause and occasion, drawing men into this sin, and misery, "because their deeds are evil," (*i. e.*) the convincing light of truth put a great deal of vigour, and activity into their consciences which they could not endure. The accusations, and condemnations of conscience are very irksome, and troublesome things to men: To avoid this, they are willing to be ignorant. An enlightened conscience gives an interruption also unto men, in their sinful courses and pleasures; they cannot sin at so easy a rate in the light, as they did in darkness; and this made them hate the light, as a very troublesome thing to them. Thus you see what was the sin, what the punishment, and what the cause of both.

Hence the observation is,

Doct. *That the greater, and clearer the light is, under which the impenitent, and unregenerate, do live in this world; by so much greater, and heavier, will their condemnation and misery be in the world to come.*

Mat. xi. 21, 22. "Wo unto thee Chorazin, wo unto thee "Bethsaida; for if the mighty works which were done in you, "had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented "long ago in sackcloth and ashes: But I say unto you, it shall "be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, "than for you." Two things require explication, in the doctrinal part of this point, *viz.*

1. How light puts a deeper guilt, and aggravation, into sin.

2. Why sin, so aggravated, makes men liable to greater condemnation.

First, We will inquire into the grounds, and reasons, why

greater, and clearer light, greatens and aggravates, proportionably, the sins that are committed under it; and it will appear, that it doth so, upon divers accounts.

First, All light (especially evangelical light) is a great preservative from sin, and an excellent means to prevent it: It is the property of light to inform the judgment, and rectify the mistakes and errors of it: and thereby to give check to the affections, in the pursuit of sinful designs and courses: It is a plain case, that many men would never do as they do, if their understandings were better informed. 1 Cor. ii. 8. "Which none of "the princes of the world knew; for had they known it, they "would not have crucified the Lord of glory:" It was want of light, and better information which drew them under that horrid, and unparallel'd guilt. Our Saviour also supposes, in the place before cited, that if Tyre and Sidon had enjoyed the same light, and means of grace that Chorazin, and Bethsaida did, they would never have been so sinful as they were: light discovers danger, and thereby overawes, and stops men from proceeding farther in those paths, and courses, that will run them into it.

Secondly, Sinning under, and against the light, supposes and involves in it a greater contempt and despite of God's authority, than sinning in ignorance and darkness doth: Every man that breaks the law of God, doth not, in the same degree, despise and slight the authority of the law-maker: But when a man hath light to discover the evil, and the danger of what he doth and yet will dare to do it, what is this, but the treading of God's authority under foot? The casting of his word behind our backs? Wilful sinning is a despiteful sinning against God, Heb. x. 26. it argues a low, and vile esteem of the law of God, which is reverent, and holy; and by so much the more it maketh sin to be exceeding sinful.

Thirdly, Sinning under, and against the light, admits not of those excuses and pleas, to extenuate the offence, which sins of pure ignorance do. Those that live without the sound of the gospel, may say, Lord, we never heard of Christ, and the great redemption wrought by him; if we had, we would never have lived, and acted as we did: and therefore Christ saith, John xv. 22. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not "had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin."

The meaning is, that if the gospel-light had not shined among them, their sin had not been of that deep guilt that now it is: For now it is so foul and heinous, by reason of the light under,

and against which it is committed, that they have no pretence, or excuse to extenuate, or mitigate it.

Fourthly, Evangelical light is a very rich favour and mercy of God to men; one of the choicest gifts bestowed upon the nations of the world; and therefore it is said, Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20. "He sheweth his word unto Jacob, and his statutes and his "judgments unto Israel: He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments they have not known them." Other nations have corn, and wine, gold, and silver, abundance of earthly delights, and pleasures: But they have not a beam of heavenly light shining upon them. We may account this mercy small; but God who is best able to value the worth of it, accounts it great. Hos. viii. 12. "I have written unto them the "great things of my law." Christ reckoned Capernaum to be exalted unto heaven by the ministry of the gospel in that place. Now, the greater the mercy is which the light of truth brings with it, by so much the more horrid and heinous must the abusing and despising of it be.

Fifthly, Sinning against the light, argues a love to sin, as sin; to naked sin, without any disguise or covert. It is nothing near so bad for a man through a mistake of judgment, when he thinks that to be lawful, which is indeed sinful; he doth not now close with sin, as sin; but he either closes with it as his duty, or, at least, his liberty: 'Tis hard for Satan to persuade many men to embrace a naked sin; and therefore he cloaths it in the habit of a duty, or liberty, and thereby deceives, and draws men to the commission of it. But if a man have light shining into his conscience, and convincing him that the way, he is in, is the way of sin, quite contrary to the revealed will of God, stripping the sin naked, before the eye of his conscience; so that he hath no covert, or excuse, and yet will persist in it; this, I say, argues a soul to be in love with sin, as sin. Now as for a man to love grace, as grace, is a solid argument to prove the truth of his grace; so, on the contrary, for a man to love sin, as sin, doth not only argue him to be in the state of sin, but to be in the fore front, and amongst the highest rank of sinners.

Sixthly, The greater, and clearer the light is, under and against which men continue in sin, the more must the consciences of such sinners be supposed to be wasted, and violated by such way of sinning: For this is a sure rule †, that "the "greatest violation of conscience, is the greatest sin." Consci-

† *Maxima violatio conscientiæ est maximum peccatum.*

ence is a noble, and tender part of the soul of man; it is in the soul, as the eye in the body, very sensible of the least injury; and a wound in the conscience, is like a blow in the eye: But nothing gives a greater blow to conscience, nothing so much wastes it, and destroys it, as sins against the light do. This puts a plain force upon the conscience, and gives a dreadful stab to that noble power, God's vicegerent in the soul. And thus you see the first thing made good, that light puts deep guilt, and aggravation into sin.

Secondly, In the next place, let us examine why sin, so aggravated by the light, makes men liable to the greater condemnation: For that it doth so, is beyond all debate, or question; else the apostle Peter would not have said of those sinners against light, as he doth, 2 Pet. ii. 21. "that it had been better for them "not to have known the way of righteousness." Nor would Christ have told the inhabitants of Chorazin, or Bethsaida, that it should be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for them. There is a twofold reason of this.

1. *Ex parte Dei*, on God's part.

2. *Ex parte peccatoris*, on the sinner's part.

First, *Ex parte Dei*, on God's part, who is the righteous Judge of the whole earth; and will therefore render unto every man according as his work shall be: For shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right? He will judge the world in righteousness, and righteousness requires that difference be made in the punishment of sinners, according to the different degrees of their sins. Now that there are different degrees of sin, is abundantly clear, from what we have lately discoursed, under the former head; where we have showed, that the light under which men sin, puts extraordinary aggravations upon their sins, answerable whereunto, will the degrees of punishment be awarded, by the righteous Judge of heaven and earth. The Gentiles, who had no other light but that dim light of nature, will be condemned, for disobeying the law of God written upon their hearts; but yet, the greater wrath is reserved for them who sin, both against the light of nature, and the light of the gospel also: And therefore it is said, Rom. ii. 9. "Tribulation and anguish upon "every soul of man that doth evil; of the Jew first, and also of "the Gentile." Impenitent Jews and Gentiles, will all be condemned, at the bar of God; but with this difference, to the Jew first, (*i. e.*) principally; and especially, because the light, and mercies which he abused, and violated, were far greater than those bestowed upon the Gentiles, "because unto them "were committed the oracles of God:" And God had not

dealt with any nation, as with that nation. Indeed, in the rewards of obedience, the ſame reaſon doth not hold; he that came into the vineyard the laſt hour of the day, may be equal, in reward, with him that bare the heat, and burthen of the whole day; becauſe the reward is of grace, and bounty, not of debt, and merit: But it is not ſo here, juſtice obſerves an exact proportion in diſtributing puniſhments, according to the degrees, deſerts, and meaſures of ſin: And therefore it is ſaid concerning Babylon, Rev. xviii. 7. "How much ſhe hath glorified herſelf, "and lived deliciouſly; ſo much torment, and ſorrow give "her."

Secondly, *Ex parte peccatoris*, upon the account of ſinners; it muſt needs be, that the heavieſt wrath, and moſt intolerable torments, ſhould be the portion of them who have ſinned againſt the cleareſt light, and means of grace: For we find, in the ſcripture account, that a principal, and ſpecial part of the torment of the damned, will ariſe from their own conſciences. Mark ix. 44. "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not "quenched." And nothing is more manifeſt than this, that if conſcience be the tormentor of the damned, then ſinners againſt light muſt needs have the greateſt torments. For,

Firſt, The more knowledge any man had in this world, the more was his conſcience violated, and abuſed here, by ſinning againſt it: And O what work will theſe violations, and abuſes, make, for a *tormenting conſcience* in hell! With what rage, and fury, will it then avenge itſelf upon the moſt ſtout, daring and impudent ſinner! The more guilt now, the more rage, and fury then.

Secondly, The more knowledge; or means of knowledge, any man hath enjoyed in this world, ſo much the more matter is prepared, and laid up for conſcience to upbraid him with, in the place of torments? And the upbraidings of conſcience are a ſpecial part of the torments of the damned. O what a peal will conſcience ring in the ears of ſuch ſinners! "Did not I warn "thee of the iſſue of ſuch ſins, undone wretch? How often "did I ſtrive with thee, if it had been poſſible to take thee "off from thy courſe of ſinning, and to eſcape this wrath? Did "not I often cry out, in thy boſom, ſtop thy courſe, ſinner? "Hearken to my counſel, turn, and live; but thou wouldeſt "not hearken to my voice? I forewarned thee of this danger, "but thou ſlighteſt all my warnings; thy luſts were too ſtrong "for my light, and now thou ſeeſt whither thy way tended, "but, alas, too late!"

Thirdly, The more knowledge, or means of knowledge any

man hath abuſed, and neglected in this world, ſo many fair opportunities, and great advantages he hath loſt for heaven; and the more opportunities, and advantages, he hath had for heaven, the more intolerable will hell be to that man; as the mercy was great, which was offered by them, ſo the torment will be unſpeakable, that will ariſe from the loſs of them. Sinners, you have now a wide, and open door, many bleſſed opportunities of ſalvation, under the goſpel; it hath put you in a fair way for everlaſting happineſs: Many of you are not far from the kingdom of God; there will be time enough, in hell, to reflect upon this loſs. What think you, will it not be ſad to think there: O how fair was I once for heaven, to have been with God, and among yonder ſaints! My conſcience was once convinced, and my affections melted under the goſpel. I was almoſt perſuaded to be a Chriſtian, indeed, the treaty was almoſt concluded, betwixt Chriſt, and my ſoul; there were but a few points in difference betwixt us; but wretch that I was, at thoſe points I ſtuck, and there the treaty ended to my eternal ruin: I could not deny my luſts, I could not live under the ſtrict yoke of Chriſt's government; but now I muſt live under the inſupportable wrath of the righteous, and terrible God for ever: and this torment will be peculiar to ſuch as periſh under the goſpel. The Heathen, who enjoyed no ſuch means, can therefore have no ſuch reflections; nay, the very devils themſelves, who never had ſuch a plank after their ſhip-wreck, I mean, a mediator in their nature, or ſuch terms of reconciliation offered them, will not reflect upon their loſt opportunities of recovery, as ſuch ſinners muſt, and will. This, therefore, "is the condemnation, "that light is come into the world; but men loved darkneſs, "rather than light."

Infer. 1. *Hence it follows, that neither knowledge, nor the beſt means of knowledge, are in themſelves, ſufficient to ſecure men from wrath to come.* Light in itſelf is a choice mercy, and therefore the means that begat, and increaſed it, muſt be ſo too; but yet it is a mercy liable to the greateſt abuſe, and the abuſe of the beſt mercies, brings forth the greateſt miſeries. Alas! Chriſtians, your duty is but half learnt, when you know it; obedience to light, makes light a bleſſing indeed. John xiii. 17. "If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them." Happineſs is not intailed upon ſimple knowing, but upon doing; upon obedience to our knowledge; otherwiſe, he that increaſeth knowledge, doth but increaſe ſorrow: "For that ſervant "which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himſelf, nor "did according to his will, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes,"

Luke xiii. 47. "And to him that knoweth to do good, and doth "it not, to him it is sin," Jam. iv. 17. We are bound with all thankfulness to acknowledge the bounty of heaven to this sinful generation, in furnishing us with so many excellent means of light, beyond many other nations, and generations that are past, but yet we ought to rejoice with trembling, when we consider the abuses of light, in this wanton age, and what a dismal event is like to happen unto many thousands among us. I fear the time is coming, when many among us will wish they had never set foot on English ground, God hath blessed this nation with many famous, burning, and shining lights. It was once said to the honour of this nation *, *that the English ministry was the world's wonder*; and when a man of another nation began to preach methodically, and convincingly, they were wont to say †, *We perceive this man hath been in England:* The greater will our account be for abusing such light, and rebelling against it. The clearer our light is now, the thicker will the mists of darkness be hereafter, if we are thus wanton under it. The devils have more light than we, and therefore the more torment: Of them it is said, Jam. ii. 19. "The devils also believe, and "tremble;" the horror of their consciences is answerable to their illumination, *they tremble*; "the ‡ word signifies the roar "of the sea," or such a murmuring, dreadful noise, as the tempestuous seas use to make when they break themselves against the rocks.

Infer. 2. *If the abuse of light thus aggravates sin and misery, then times of great temptations are like to be times of deep guilt.* Wo to an enlightned, knowing generation, when strong temptations befal them. How do many, in such times, imprison the known truth, to keep themselves out of prison? offer violence to their own consciences, to avoid violence from other hands?

Plato ‖ was convinced of the unity of God, but durst not own his convictions; but said, "It was a truth neither easy to find, "nor safe to own." And even Seneca *†, the renowned moralist, "was forced by temptation to dissemble his convictions;" of

* *Clerus Anglicanus stupor mundi.*

† *Percipimus hunc hominem fuisse in Anglia.*

‡ Φρικωδης φρικ. *est maris agitatio.* Rust.

‖ *Opificem universorum neque invenire facile, neque inventum in vulgus promulgare tutum.*

*† *In animi religione non habeat, sed in actibus fingat.*

whom Auguſtine ſaith, "* He worſhipped what himſelf repre-
" hended, and did what himſelf reproved." And even a great Papiſt of later times was heard to ſay, as he was going to maſs, *Eamus ad communem errorem*, Let us go to the common error. O how hard is it to keep conſcience pure and peaceable in days of temptation! Doubtleſs, it is a mercy to many weak and timorous Chriſtians, to be removed by a ſeaſonable death, out of harms way; to be diſbanded by a merciful providence before the heat of the battle. Chriſt and Antichriſt ſeem at this day to be drawing into the field; a fiery trial threatens the profeſſors of this age: but when it comes to a cloſe engagement, indeed we may juſtly tremble, to think how many thouſands will break their way through the convictions of their own conſciences, to ſave their fleſh. Believe it, ſirs, if Chriſt hold you to himſelf by no other tie than the ſlender thread of a ſingle conviction; if he have not intereſt in your hearts and affections, as well as in your underſtandings and conſciences; if you be men of great light, and ſtrong unmortified luſts; if you profeſs Chriſt with your tongues, and worſhip the world with your hearts; a man may ſay of you, without the gift of prophecy, what the prophet ſaid of Hazael, I know what you will do in the day of temptation.

Infer. 3. *If this be ſo, what a ſtrong engagement lieth upon all enlightned perſons to turn heartily to God, and reduce their knowledge into practice and obedience?* The more men know, the more violence they do their own conſciences, in rebelling againſt the light; this is to ſin with an high hand, Num. xv. 30. Believe it, ſirs, you cannot ſin at ſo cheap a rate as others do: knowledge in a wicked man, like high mettle in a blind horſe, doth but the ſooner precipitate him into ruin. You may know much more than others, but if ever you come to heaven, it muſt be in the ſame way of faith and obedience, mortification and ſelf-denial, in which the weakeſt Chriſtian comes thither; whatever knowledge you have, to be ſure you have no wiſdom, if you expect ſalvation upon any other, or eaſier terms than the moſt illiterate Chriſtian finds it. It was a ſad obſervation of the father, *Surgunt indocti, et rapiunt coelum;* the unlearned riſe, and take heaven. What a pity is it, that men of ſuch excellent parts ſhould be enſlaved to their luſts! that ever it ſhould be ſaid, *Sapientes ſapienter deſcendunt in Gehennam;* their learning

* *Colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat.*

doth but hang in their light, it doth but blind them in ſpiritual things, and prepareth them for greater miſery.

Infer. 4. *Hence alſo it follows, that the work of converſion is a very difficult work; the ſoul is ſcarcely half won to Chriſt, when Satan is caſt out of the underſtanding by illumination.* The devil hath deeply intrenched himſelf, and ſtrongly fortified every faculty of the ſoul againſt Chriſt; the underſtanding, indeed, is the firſt entrance into the ſoul, and out of that faculty he is oftentimes caſt, by light and conviction, which ſeems to make a great change upon a man: now he becomes a profeſſor, now he takes up the duties of religion, and paſſes up and down the world for a convert; but, alas, alas! all the while Satan keeps the fort-royal, the heart and will are in his own poſſeſſion; and this is a work of more difficulty: the weapons of that warfare muſt indeed be mighty through God, which do not only caſt down imaginations, but bring every thought of the heart into captivity, to the obedience of Chriſt, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. While the heart ſtands out, though the underſtanding be taken in, the ſoul remains in Satan's poſſeſſion; it is a greater work, (and we daily find it ſo), to win one heart, than to convince twenty underſtandings.

Infer. 5. *Hence alſo we may learn, what ſtrength and power there is in the luſts of mens hearts, which are able to bear down ſo ſtrong convictions of the conſcience before them.* That is a great truth, though a very ſad one, Eccl. viii. 11. "The heart "of the ſons of men is fully ſet in them to do evil." O how common it is, every day, and in every place, to ſee men hazarding their ſouls to ſatisfy their luſts! Every man, ſaith the prophet, "turneth his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battle." The horſe is a very fierce and warlike creature; and when his courage is rouzed by the ſounds of trumpets and ſhouts of armies, he breaks headlong into the ranks of armed men, though death is before him. Such boiſterous and headlong luſts are found in many enlightned perſons, though their conſciences repreſent damnation before them; onward they will ruſh, though God be loſt, and a precious ſoul undone for ever.

Infer. 6. To conclude, *As ever you will avoid the deepeſt guilt, and eſcape the heavieſt condemnation, open your hearts to obey, and practiſe whatſoever God hath opened your underſtandings and conſciences to receive of his revealed will;* obey the light of the goſpel, while you have opportunity to enjoy it: this was the great counſel given by Chriſt, John xii. 35, 36. "Yet "a little while the light is with you, walk while ye have the "light, leſt darkneſs come upon you." The manifeſtation of

Christ in the gospel, is the light of the world; all the nations of the earth that want this light are benighted: and those upon whom this light is risen, have but a short time under it: "Yet "a little while the light is with you:" and whatever patience God may exercise towards poor, ignorant souls, yet commonly he makes short work with the despisers of this light. The light of the gospel is a shining lamp, fed with golden oil; God will not be at the expence of such a light for them that do but trifle with it. The night is coming, when no man can work. There are many sad signs upon us of a setting sun, a night of darkness approaching; many burning and shining lights are extinguished, and many *put under a bushel*; your work is great, your time short; this is the only space you have for repentance, Rev. ii. 21. If this opportunity of salvation be lost, it will never come again, Ezek. xxiv. 13. How pathetical was that lamentation which Christ made over Jerusalem, Luke xix. 41, 42. "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and "wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least "in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but "now they are hid from thine eyes." Christ is threatning those nations with the removal of his gospel presence; he hath found but cold entertainment among us: England hath been unkind to Christ, many thousands there are that rebel against the light, that say unto God, "Depart from us, we desire not "the knowledge of thy ways." Christ will not tarry where he is not welcome; who would, that hath any where else to go? Obey the light therefore, lest God put it out in obscure darkness.

SERMON XXXIV.

The blinding Policies of Satan opened, as the Cause of Unbelief, and Forerunner of Destruction.

2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. *But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

THE aversations of men from Jesus Christ, their only remedy, is as much to be admired as lamented; one would

think the news of deliverance ſhould make the hearts of captives leap for joy, the tidings of a Saviour ſhould tranſport the heart of a loſt ſinner. A man would think a little rhetoric might perſuade the naked ſoul of a ſinner to put on the rich robes of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, which will coſt him nothing, but acceptance; or the periſhing, ſtarving ſinner to accept the bread of God which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. This is the great deſign I have managed in this whole diſcourſe; the centre to which all theſe lines are drawn; many arguments have been uſed, and many ways attempted to prevail with men to apply and put on Chriſt, and I am afraid, all too little. I have but laboured in vain, and ſpent my ſtrength for nought; all theſe diſcourſes are but the beating of the air, and few, if any, will be perſuaded to come unto Chriſt, who is clearly opened, and freely offered in the goſpel to them. For alas! while I am reaſoning, Satan is blinding their minds with falſe reaſonings, and contrary perſuaſions; the god of this world turns away the ears, and draws away the hearts of almoſt the whole world from Chriſt; "The god of this world hath blinded the "minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious "goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto "them." Satan is a great and jealous prince, and is well aware, that ſo many of his ſubjects as ſhall be brought to ſee the miſery of their condition, will never endure to abide any longer in ſubjection to him: it is therefore his great policy to put out their eyes, that he may ſecure their ſouls; to darken their underſtandings, that he may keep his intereſt firm and entire in their wills and affections: and this makes the effectual application of Chriſt ſo great a difficulty, that, on the contrary, it is juſt matter of admiration that any ſoul is perſuaded and prevailed with to quit the ſervice of Satan, and come to Chriſt. And therefore, in the laſt place, to diſcover the great difficulty of converſion, and ſhew you where it is that all our endeavours are obſtructed, ſo that we can move the deſign no further, with all our labouring and ſtriving, reaſoning and perſuading; as alſo, to mourn over, and bewail the miſery of chriſtleſs and unregenerate ſouls, with whom we muſt part, upon the ſaddeſt terms; I have choſe this ſcripture, which is of a moſt awakening nature, if haply the Lord, at laſt, may perſuade any ſoul to come over to Chriſt thereby.

Theſe words come into the apoſtle's diſcourſe, by way of *prolepſis*; he had been ſpeaking, in the former chapter, of the tranſcendent excellency of the goſpel above the law, and, among other reſpects, he prefers it to the law in point of clearneſs.

The law was an obſcure and cloudy diſpenſation, there was a veil upon the face of Moſes, and the hearts of the people, that they could not ſee to the end of that which is aboliſhed; but under the goſpel we all, with open face, behold, as in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord. Againſt this diſcourſe, the apoſtle foreſaw, and obviated this objection: if your goſpel be ſo clear, what is the reaſon that many, who live under the miniſtration of it, (and they none of the meaneſt, neither, for wiſdom, and underſtanding) do yet ſee no glory, nor excellency in it? To this he returns, in the words I have read, "If our goſpel be hid, it is "hid to them that are loſt, whoſe eyes the god of this world hath "blinded," &c. *q. d.* It is true, multitudes there are, who ſee no glory in Chriſt, or the goſpel, but the fault is not in either; but in the minds of them that believe not. The ſun ſhines forth in its glory, but the blind ſee no glory in it; the fault is not in the ſun, but in the eye. In the words themſelves we have three parts to conſider:

1. A dreadful, ſpiritual judgment inflicted.
2. The wicked inſtrument by whom it is inflicted.
3. The politic manner in which he doth it.

Firſt, We have here a very dreadful, ſpiritual judgment inflicted upon the ſouls of men, *viz.* the hiding of the goſpel from them: if our goſpel be hid. For theſe words, Ει δ και, are a conceſſion, that ſo it is; a very ſad, but undeniable truth. Many are there who ſee no beauty in Chriſt, nor neceſſity of him; though both are ſo plainly and evidently revealed in our goſpel, "if our goſpel be hid:" It is called our goſpel, not as if St. Paul, and the other preachers of it, were the authors, and inventors of it; but our goſpel, becauſe we are the preachers, and diſpenſers of it. We are put in truſt with the goſpel, and though we preach it, in the demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power, uſing all plainneſs of ſpeech to make men underſtand it; yet it is hid from many, under our miniſtry: it is hid from their underſtandings, they ſee no glory in it; and hid from their hearts, thy ſee no power in it. Our goſpel, notwithſtanding all our endeavours, is a hidden goſpel unto ſome; this is the ſoreſt, and moſt dreadful judgment.

Secondly, We have here an account of that wicked inſtrument by whom this judgment is inflicted, *viz.* Satan, called here (by a *mimeſis*) *the god of this world*; not ſimply and properly, but becauſe he challenges to himſelf the honour of a god, rules over a vaſt empire, and hath multitudes of ſouls, even the greater part of the world, in ſubjection, and blind obedience to his government.

Thirdly, Here, alſo, we have an account of the politic manner of this government, how he maintains his dominion among men, and keeps the world in quiet ſubjection to him; namely, by blinding the minds of all them that believe not; putting out the eyes of all his ſubjects, darkening that noble faculty, the mind, or underſtanding; the thinking, conſidering, and reaſoning power of the ſoul, which the philoſophers truly call το ηγεμονικον, the leading, and directing faculty: for it is to the ſoul, what eyes are to the body, and it is therefore called "the "eyes of the underſtanding," Eph. i. 18. Theſe eyes Satan blinds, *(i. e.)* he darkens the mind, and underſtanding, with ignorance, and error; ſo that when men come to ſee, and conſider ſpiritual things, "they ſee, indeed, but perceive not," Iſa. vi. 9, 10. They have ſome general, confuſed notions, but no diſtinct, powerful, and effectual apprehenſions of thoſe things: and this is the way, indeed, none like it, to bar men effectually from Jeſus Chriſt, and hinder the *application of the benefits of redemption* to their ſouls. It is true, the righteous God permits all this to be done by Satan, upon the ſouls of men; but whereſoever he finally prevails thus to blind them, it is, as the text ſpeaks, εν τοις απολλυμενοις, *in them that are loſt*, or appointed of God unto perdition. The elect of God are all blinded for a time, but Chriſt applieth unto them his eye-ſalve; effectually opens the eyes of their underſtandings, and recovers them thereby, out of Satan's power and dominion: but as for thoſe who ſtill continue thus blinded, the ſymptoms and characters of eternal death, appear upon their ſouls; they are a company of loſt men.

Doct. *That the underſtandings of all unbelivers are blinded by Satan's policies, in order to their everlaſting perdition.*

Four things muſt be opened in the doctrinal part of this point.

Firſt, What the blinding of the underſtanding, or hiding of the goſpel from the underſtanding, is.

Secondly, I ſhall demonſtrate, that the underſtandings of many are thus blinded, and the goſpel hidden from them.

Thirdly, I ſhall ſhew what policies Satan uſes to blind the minds of men.

Fourthly, That this blindneſs is the foreſt judgment, and in order to mens everlaſting perdition.

Fifthly, And then apply the whole.

Firſt, We ſhall enquire what the blinding of the mind, or hiding the goſpel from it, is. Two ſorts of men are thus blinded in the world.

1. Thoſe that want the means of illumination.

2. Thoſe that have the means, but are denied the bleſſing and efficacy of them.

The former is the caſe of the Pagan world, who are in midnight darkneſs, for want of the goſpel. The latter is the caſe of the Chriſtian world. The greateſt part of them that live within the ſound of the goſpel, being blinded by the god of this world, Iſa. vii. 9, 10. "And he ſaid, Go, and tell this people; "hear ye, indeed, but underſtand not; and ſee ye, indeed, but "perceive not: Make the heart of this people fat, and make "their ears heavy; and ſhut their eyes, leſt they ſee with their "eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their "heart, and convert, and be healed." Thus, when the Sun of righteouſneſs actually aroſe in the world, it is ſaid, John i. 5. "The light ſhined in darkneſs, but the darkneſs comprehended "it not." So we may ſay of all that light which is in the underſtanding of all unbelievers, what Job ſpeaks of the grave, Job x. 22. "That the light there is as darkneſs." But more particularly, to open the nature of this ſpiritual blindneſs, I will ſhew you,

1. What it is not oppoſed unto.

2. What it is oppoſed unto.

1. Let us examine what ſpiritual blindneſs, or the hiding the goſpel from the minds of men, is not oppoſed unto: and we ſhall find,

Firſt, That it is not oppoſed unto natural wiſdom; a man may be of an acute and clear underſtanding; eagle-eyed, to diſcern the myſteries of nature, and yet the goſpel may be hidden from him. Who were more ſagacious, and quick-ſighted, in natural things, than the Heathen Philoſophers, renowned for wiſdom in their generation? yet unto them the goſpel was but *fooliſhneſs*, 1 Cor. i. 20, 21. St. Auguſtine confeſſeth, that before his converſion, he was filled with offence, and contempt of the ſimplicity of the goſpel. *Dedignabar eſſe parvulus*, ſaith he, I ſcorned to become a child again. And that great Bradwardine, the profound doctor, who was learned, *uſque ad ſtuporem*, even to a wonder; profeſſed, that when he firſt read Paul's epiſtles, he deſpiſed them, becauſe he found not in them, *metaphyſicum igenium*, thoſe metaphyſical notions which he expected. Upon this account it was, that Chriſt brake forth into that pathetical gratulation of his Father's love to the elect, Mat. xi. 25. "At that time Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid, I thank thee, O "Father, Lord of heaven and earth; becauſe thou haſt hid theſe

" things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them un-
" to babes."

Secondly, It is not oppoſed to all light, and knowledge, in ſpiritual truths. A man may have a true underſtanding of the ſcriptures, give an orthodox expoſition of them, and enlighten the minds of others by them; and yet the goſpel may be hidden from himſelf, Mat. vii. 22. "Many will ſay unto me in that
" day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name?" So, Rom. ii. 19. "And art confident that thou thyſelf art a
" guide of the blind, a light to them that ſit in darkneſs," *&c.* A man may ſhew others the way to Chriſt, and ſalvation, whilſt both are hid from himſelf.

Thirdly, It is not oppoſed to all kind of influences upon the affections; for, it is poſſible, the goſpel may touch the affections themſelves, and cauſe ſome ſweet motions and raptures in them; and yet be an hidden goſpel to the ſoul, Heb. vi. 5, 9.

But if theſe three things may conſiſt with ſpiritual blindneſs, unto what then is it oppoſed? To which I anſwer, that ſpiritual blindneſs ſtands only oppoſed unto that ſaving manifeſtation of Jeſus Chriſt in the goſpel, by the Spirit, whereby the ſoul is regenerated, and effectually changed, by a real converſion unto God: Wherever the goſpel thus comes, in the demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power; producing ſuch an effect as this in the ſoul; it is no longer an hidden goſpel to that ſoul, though ſuch perſons do not ſee clearly all that glory which is revealed by the goſpel; though they know but in part, and ſee darkly, as through a glaſs; yet the eyes of their underſtandings are opened, and the things which belong to their peace are not hidden from them.

Secondly, But though this be the happineſs of ſome men, yet it is demonſtrable, that the eyes of many are blinded by the God of this world, and the goſpel is an hidden goſpel from them; for,

Firſt, Many that live under the goſpel are ſo entirely ſwallowed up in the affairs of this world, that they allow themſelves no time to ponder the great concernment of their ſouls in the world to come; and judge you, whatever the gifts and knowledge of theſe men are, whether the god of this world hath not blinded their eyes. If it were not ſo, it were impoſſible that ever they ſhould thus waſte the moſt precious opportunities of ſalvation, upon which their everlaſting well-being depends, and ſpend time, at the door of eternity, about trifles which ſo little concern them. Yet this is the caſe of the greateſt number that go under the Chriſtian name. The earth hath opened her

mouth and ſwallowed up their own time, thoughts, ſtudies, and ſtrength, as it did the bodies of Corah and his *accomplices*. The firſt, the freeſt, yea, the whole of their time, is devoted to the ſervice of the world; for even at that very time, when they preſent their bodies before the Lord, in the duties of his worſhip, their hearts are wandering after vanities, and "going "after their covetouſneſs," Ezek. xliii. 31. Judge whether the god of this world hath blinded theſe men or no, who can ſee ſo much beauty in the world, but none in Chriſt, and put an abſolute neceſſity upon the vanities of this world, but none upon their own ſalvation. If this be not ſpiritual blindneſs, what is?

Secondly, The great ſtillneſs, and quietneſs of mens conſciences, under the moſt rouzing, and awakening truths of the goſpel, plainly proves that the god of this world hath blinded their eyes. For, did men ſee, and apprehend the dangerous condition they are in, as the word repreſents it; nothing in the world would quiet them but Chriſt. As ſoon as mens eyes come to be opened, the next enquiry they make, is, "What ſhall we do to "be ſaved?" It is not poſſible, that a man ſhould hang over hell, ſee Chriſt, and the hopes of ſalvation going, and the day of patience ending, and yet be quiet. O! it cannot be, that conſcience ſhould let them be quiet in ſuch a caſe, if it were not blinded and ſtupified; but whilſt the god of this world, "that ſtrong "man armed, keepeth the houſe, all his goods are in peace," Luke xi. 21. If once your eyes were opened by conviction, a man may then ſay, be quiet if you can; ſit ſtill, and let the hopes, and ſeaſons of ſalvation, paſs quietly away, if you can. Suppoſe one ſhould come into the congregation, and whiſper but ſuch a word as this in your ears, your child is fallen into the fire, and is a dying, ſince you came from home; will it be in the power of all friends you have, to quiet you, and make you ſit ſtill after ſuch an information? much leſs when a man apprehends his own ſoul in immediate danger of everlaſting burnings.

Thirdly, The ſtrong confidences, and preſumptuous hopes men have of ſalvation, whilſt they remain in the ſtate of nature, and unregeneracy, plainly ſhew their minds to be blinded by the policy of Satan. This preſumption is one of thoſe παραλογισμοι, falſe reaſonings, by which Satan deludes the underſtanding, as the apoſtle calls them, James i. 22. It is the cunning ſophiſtry of the devil, fathered by ſelf-love, Prov. xxi. 2. "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes," and partly

by ſelf-ignorance, Rev. iii. 17. "Thou ſaidſt I am rich, and "have need of nothing, and knoweſt not that thou art poor." You have no fears, no doubts, no caſe to propound that concerns your future ſtate; and why ſo? but becauſe you have no ſight; your conſciences are quieted, becauſe your eyes are blinded.

Fourthly, The trifling of men, with the duties of religion, plainly diſcovers the blinding power of Satan upon their minds and underſtandings, elſe they would never play, and dally with the ſerious, and ſolemn ordinances of God, at that rate they do; if their eyes were once opened, they would be in earneſt in prayer, and apply themſelves with the cloſeſt attention of mind to hearing the goſpel. There are two ſorts of thoughts about any ſubject of meditation. Some think at a diſtance, and others think cloſe to the ſubject. Never do thoughts of men come ſo cloſe to Chriſt, to heaven, and to hell, as they do immediately upon their illumination. When John's miniſtry enlightened the peoples minds, it is ſaid, Matth. xi. 12. "From the days of John "the Baptiſt until now, the kingdom of heaven ſuffereth vio-"lence, and the violent take it by force." Surely theſe men were more in good earneſt, that would receive no repulſe, take no denial, but even force themſelves through all difficulties into heaven; and ſo would it be with you. If the god of this world had not blinded your minds, you would never pray with ſo much unconcernedneſs, nor hear with ſo much negligence, and careleſneſs; pray, as if you prayed not, and hear as if you heard not. It is with many of your hearts, as it was with Ariſtotle, who after a quaint oration made before him, was aſked how he liked it; truly, ſaid he, I did not hear it; for I was thinking all the while of another matter.

Fifthly, This alſo is a plain evidence, that the god of this world hath blinded many mens eyes among us, for that they fear not to commit great ſins, to avoid ſmall hazards and troubles, which all the world could never perſuade them to do, if they were not hood-winked by the god of this world. Thoſe that have ſeen ſin, as ſin, in the glaſs of God's law, "will chuſe as "Moſes did, to ſuffer any affliction with the people of God, ra-"ther than enjoy the pleaſures of ſin, which are but for a ſea-"ſon," Heb. xi. 25. Thoſe that have ſeen, and felt the evil of ſin in the deep troubles of their ſpirits for it, will account all reproaches, all loſſes, all ſufferings from men, to be but as nothing to the burthen of ſin.

Sixthly, The pride, and ſelf-conceitedneſs of many thouſands, who profeſs Chriſtianity, plainly ſhew their minds to be blinded

by the *ſophiſtry of Satan*, and that they do not underſtand themſelves, and the woful ſtate of their own ſouls. Thoſe that ſee God in the cleareſt light, abhor themſelves in the deepeſt humility, Iſa. vi. 5. John xliii. 5. If ever the Lord had effectually opened your eyes, by a clear diſcovery of your ſtate by nature, and the courſe of your life, under the efficacy and influence of continual temptations, and corruptions, how would your plumes fall? None in the world would rate you lower, than you yourſelves would. By all which it appears, that multitudes are blinded by the god of this world.

Thirdly, In the third place, we are to conſider, what policies Satan uſeth to blind the minds of them that believe not, and we ſhall find there are three ſorts of policies practiſed by the god of this world upon the minds and underſtandings of men, which he darkens, by

1. Hindering the reception of goſpel-light,
2. Obſtructing the efficacy of it when received.
3. Making miſapplication of it to other purpoſes.

It is a great policy in Satan, to blind the underſtandings of men, by hindering, and preventing the reception of goſpel-light, which he doth eſpecially theſe five ways;

Firſt, By tempting the diſpenſers of the goſpel to darken the truths thereof, in the delivering of them, to ſhoot over the heads of their hearers, in lofty language, and terms of art, ſo that common underſtandings can give no account, when the ſermon is done, what a preacher would have; but, however, commend him for a good ſcholar, and an excellent orator. I make no doubt but the devil is very buſy with miniſters in their ſtudies, tempting them, by the pride of their own hearts, to gratify his deſign herein; he teaches them how to paint the glaſs, that he might keep out the light.

I acknowledge, a proper, grave, and comely ſtile, befits the lips of *Chriſt's ambaſſadors*; they would not be rude, and careleſs in their language, or method. But this affectation of great ſwelling words of vanity, is but too like the proud Gnoſtics, whom the apoſtle is ſuppoſed to tax for this evil, Jude, ver. 16. "This is to darken counſel, by words without "knowledge," Job xxxi. 2. To amuſe, and bemiſt poor ignorant ſouls, and nullify the deſign of preaching; for every thing is accounted ſo far good, as it is good to the end it is ordained for. A ſword, that hath an hilt of gold, ſet thick with diamonds, is no good ſword, if it hath no edge to cut, or want a good back to follow home the ſtroke. O that the miniſters

of Christ would chuse rather * sound, than great words, such as are apt to pierce the heart, rather than such as tickle the fancy; and let people beware of furthering the design of Satan against their own souls, in putting a temptation upon their ministers, by despising plain preaching. The more popular, plain, and intelligible our discourses are, so much the more probable they are to be successful; that is the most excellent oratory, that persuades men to Christ.

Secondly, Satan hinders the access of light to the understandings of men, by employing their minds about impertinent things, while they are attending upon the ordinances of God; thus he tempted them in Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. "And they come unto "thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee, as my "people; and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; "for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart "goeth after their covetousness. And lo! thou art unto them "as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice." The modulation of the prophet's voice was very pleasing to their ears, but mean while their fancies, and thoughts were wandring after their lusts, their hearts were full of earthly projects.

Thirdly, Satan hinders the access of light to the understandings of men, by raising objections, and picking quarrels with the word, on purpose to shake its authority, and hinder the assent of the understanding to it, and so the word makes no more impression than a fable, or a *romance* would do. And never did this design of Satan obtain more than in this atheistical age, wherein the main pillars and foundation of religion are shaken in the minds of multitudes. The devil hath persuaded many, that the gospel is but a cunningly devised fable; *fabula Christi*, as that blaspheming pope called it; that ministers must say something to get a living. That heaven and hell are but fancies, or at most, things of great uncertainty, and doubtful credit. This being once obtained, the door of the soul is shut against truth. And this design of Satan hath prospered the more in this generation, by the corrupt doctrines of seducing spirits, "Which "have overthrown the faith of some," 2 Tim. ii. 18. And partly from the scandalous lives of loose and vain professors, the gospel hath been brought into contempt; but especially by Satan's artificial improvement of the corrupt natures of men, in an age wherein conscience hath been so much debauched, and Atheism thereby spread as a gangrene in the body politic.

* They who speak in a popular, plain, and simple manner, are the best instructors of the people. *Bucholtz.*

Fourthly, Satan hinders the acceſs of light, by helping erroneous minds to draw falſe concluſions, and perverſe inferences from the great and precious truths of the goſpel; and thereby bringing them under prejudice and contempt: Thus he aſſiſts the errors of mens minds about the doctrine of *election*; when he either perſuades them, that it is an unreaſonable doctrine, and not worthy of credit, that God ſhould chuſe ſome, and refuſe others every way as good as thoſe he hath choſen; or if there be any certainty in that doctrine, then men may throw the reins upon the neck of their luſts, and live at what rate they liſt. For if God have choſen them to ſalvation, their wickedneſs ſhall not hinder it; and if he have appointed them unto wrath, their diligence and ſelf-denial cannot prevent it.

Thus the doctrine of free grace is by the like ſophiſtry of Satan turned into laſciviouſneſs. If grace abound, men may ſin the more freely; and the ſhortneſs of our time upon earth, which in its own nature awakens all men to diligence, is, by the ſubtilty of Satan, turned to a quite contrary purpoſe, "Let "us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

Fifthly, Satan darkens the minds of men, and ſhuts them up againſt the light, by blowing them up with pride, and ſelf-conceitedneſs, perſuading them that they know all theſe things already, and cauſing them to contemn the moſt weighty and precious truths of God, as trite and vulgar notions. The word cannot be received without meekneſs, and humility of mind, Jam. i. 21. Pſal. xxv. 8, 9. and pride is the nurſe of ignorance, 1 Tim. vi. 4. 1 Cor. viii. 7. The devil is aware of this, and therefore blows up the pride, and conceitedneſs of mens hearts, all that he can: And this temptation of his generally prevails wherever it meets with a knowing head, matched with a graceleſs, and unſanctified heart. And thus we ſee by what wiles and policies, Satan keeps out the light, and prevents the acceſs of it to the minds of men.

But if he miſs his deſign here, and truth gets into the mind, Then

Secondly, He labours to obſtruct the efficacy, and operation of the light; and, though it do ſhine into the underſtanding, yet it ſhall be impriſoned there; and ſend down no converting influences upon the will, and affections: And this deſign he promotes, and manages divers ways.

Firſt, By haſtening to quench convictions betimes, and nip them in the bud. Satan knows how dangerous a thing it is, and deſtructive to his intereſt, to ſuffer convictions to continue long; and therefore it is ſaid of him, Mat. xiii. 19. When any

"one heareth the word of the kingdom, and underſtandeth it "not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which "was ſown in his heart." Satan is compared in this ſcripture to the fowls in the air, which pick up the ſeed before it take any root in the earth. The devil is very jealous of this, and therefore labours all he can to deſtroy the word before it comes to operate upon the heart; which he doth ſometimes by the cares of the world, and ſometimes by vain companions, who prove mere quench coals unto the beginning convictions. One ſinner deſtroyeth much good.

Secondly, No ſooner doth the god of this world obſerve the light of truth begin to operate upon the heart, but he obſtructeth that deſign by *procraſtinations* and delays, which delude and baffle convinced ſouls; he perſuades them if they will alter their courſe, it will be time enough hereafter, when ſuch encumbrances and troubles, in the world, are over; if he prevail here, 'tis a thouſand to one but the work miſcarries. Jam. i. 13, 14. If the hearer of the word be not a doer (*i. e.*) a preſent doer, while the impreſſions of it are freſh upon the ſoul, *he doth but deceive himſelf*. For it is with the heart, as it is with melted wax, if the ſeal be clapped to it preſently, it will receive a fair impreſſion; but if it be let alone, but for a little while, you can make none at all; it was therefore David's great care and wiſdom to ſet about the work of religion under, the firſt *impetus*, or vigorous motion of his heart and affections. Pſal. cxix. 60. "I "made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy commandments." Multitudes of ſouls have periſhed by theſe delays. It is a temptation incident to all that are under beginning convictions, eſpecially young perſons, whom the devil perſuades that it were no better than madneſs in them to abridge, and deny themſelves ſo much delight, and pleaſure, and ſteep their youthful thoughts in ſuch a melancholy ſubject as religion is.

Thirdly, If all this will not do, but convictions ſtill continue to get ground in the conſcience, then he endeavours, to ſcare, and fright them out of their convictions, by repreſenting to them the inward terrors, troubles, and deſpairs into which they are about to plunge themſelves, and that henceforth they muſt never expect a pleaſant day, or comfortable hour. Thus doth the God of this world blind the minds of them that believe not, both by hindering the acceſs of light to the mind, and the influence of it upon the heart.

Thirdly, There is yet one policy of Satan to keep ſouls in darkneſs, and that is, by the miſapplication of truth; perſuading them, that whatſoever they read, or hear of the miſery,

and danger of chriſtleſs, and unregenerate perſons, doth not in the leaſt touch or concern them, but the more notorious and prophane part of the world; and by this policy he blinds the minds of all civil and moral perſons. Thus the "Phariſees "truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed o-"thers." And ſo the Laodiceans thought themſelves *rich, and encreaſed with goods;* this is, in a very ſafe and good condition *. Now there are divers things notably improved by Satan's policy, in order to theſe miſapplications of truth. As,

Firſt, The freedom of their lives from the moſt groſs pollutions of the world. Mat. xix. 20. "All theſe things have I "kept from my youth up." A civil, ſober courſe of life is a moſt effectual blind before the eyes of many a man's conſcience.

Secondly, It is the policy of Satan to prevent convictions by conviction: I mean effectual convictions, by convictions, that have been ineffectual, and are now vaniſhed away. Thus the troubles that ſome perſons have been under, muſt paſs for their converſion, though the temper of their heart be the ſame it was: Their ineffectual troubles are made uſe of by the devil to blind them in the true knowledge, and apprehenſion of their condition. For theſe men and women can ſpeak of the troubles they have had for ſin, and the many tears they have ſhed for it; whereby thorough conviction is effectually prevented.

Thirdly, Gifts, and knowledge are improved by the policy of Satan, againſt the true knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, and our own eſtate by nature. As conviction, is improved by Satan's policy againſt conviction, ſo is knowledge againſt knowledge. This was the caſe of them in Rom. ii. 17, 18. "Thou art "called a Jew, and reſteſt in the law, and makeſt thy boaſt of "God, and knoweſt his will, and approveſt the things that are "excellent; being inſtructed out of the law, and art confident "that thou thyſelf art a guide to the blind," &c. And this is the temptation, and deluſion of knowing perſons, who are ſo far from being blind in their own account, that they account themſelves the guides of the blind: Yet who blinder than ſuch men?

Fourthly, External reformation is improved by the policy of Satan againſt true ſpiritual reformation, and paſſes current up and down the world for converſion; though it ſerves only to ſtrengthen Satan's intereſt in the ſoul, Matth. xii. 44. and for want of a real change of heart, doth but encreaſe their ſin and miſery, 2 Pet. ii. 20. This is the generation that is pure in their own eyes, and yet are not waſhed from their filthineſs.

* See my Touchſtone of Sincerity upon *Rev.* iii. 17, 18.

The *cleanneſs* of their hands blinds them in diſcovering the *foulneſs* of their hearts.

Fifthly, The policy of Satan improves diligence in ſome duties, againſt the convictions of other duties. The external duties of religion, as hearing, praying, faſting, againſt the great duties of repenting and believing. This was their caſe, Iſa. lviii. 2, 3. "Yet they ſeek me daily, and delight to know my ways; "as a nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the ordi- "nances of their God. They aſk of me the ordinances of ju- "ſtice, they take delight in approaching to God. Wherefore "have we faſted, ſay they, and thou ſeeſt not? Wherefore "have we afflicted our ſouls, and thou takeſt no knowledge?" Thus duty is improved againſt duty, the externals againſt the internals of religion, and multitudes are blinded this way.

Sixthly, The policy of Satan improves zeal againſt zeal; and thereby blinds a great part of the world: he allows men to be zealous againſt a falſe religion, if thereby he may prevent them from being zealous in the true religion. He diverts their zeal againſt their own ſins, by ſpending it againſt other mens. Thus Paul was once blinded by his own zeal for the law, Acts xxii. 3. And many men, at this day, ſatisfy themſelves in their own zeal againſt the corruptions of God's worſhip, and the ſuperſtitions of others, who never felt the power of true religion upon their own hearts; a dangerous blind of Satan.

Seventhly, The policy of Satan improves the eſteem and reſpect men have from the people of God, againſt their great duty and intereſt to become ſuch themſelves, Rev. iii. 1. "Thou "haſt a name that thou liveſt, but thou art dead." It is enough to many men that they obtain acceptation among the ſaints, though they be none of that number; the good opinion of others, begets and confirms their good opinion of themſelves.

Eightly, The policy of Satan improves ſoundneſs of judgment, againſt ſoundneſs of heart. An orthodox head, againſt an orthodox heart and life; dogmatical faith, againſt juſtifying faith. This was the caſe of them before-mentioned, Rom. ii. 18, 19. Men ſatisfy themſelves, that they have a ſound underſtanding, though, at the ſame time, they have a very rotten heart. It is enough for them that their heads are regular, though their hearts and lives be very irregular.

Ninthly, The policy of Satan improves the bleſſings of God, againſt the bleſſings of God, blinding us by the bleſſings of providence, ſo as not to diſcern the want of ſpiritual bleſſings; perſuading men that the ſmiles of providence, in their proſperity, ſucceſs, and thriving deſigns in the world, are good eviden-

ces of the love of God to their ſouls, not at all diſcerning how the proſperity of fools deceives them, and that riches are often given to the hurt of the owners thereof.

Tenthly, The policy of Satan improves comforts againſt comfort, falſe and ungrounded comforts under the word, againſt the real grounds of comfort lying in the ſoul's intereſt in Chriſt. Thus many men finding a great deal of comfort in the promiſes, are ſo blinded thereby, as never to look after union with Chriſt, the only ſolid ground of all true comfort, Heb. vi. 5, 9.

And thus you ſee, how the God of this world blindeth the minds of them that believe not, and how the goſpel is hid to them that are loſt.

* *

SERMON XXXV.

2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. *But if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.*

THE words have been opened, and this point obſerved:

Doct. *That the underſtandings of all unbelievers are blinded by Satan's policies, in order to their everlaſting perdition.*

We have ſhewn already what the blinding the mind, or hiding of the goſpel from it, is; it hath alſo been demonſtrated that the goſpel is hid, and the minds of many blinded under it; you have alſo ſeen what policies Satan uſes to blind the minds of men, even in the cleareſt light of the goſpel. It remains now that I open to you the dreadful nature of this judgment of God upon the ſouls of men, and then make application of the whole.

There are many judgments of God inflicted upon the ſouls, and bodies of men, in this world; but none of them are ſo dreadful as thoſe ſpiritual judgments are, which God inflicts immediately upon the ſoul: and among ſpiritual judgments, few or none are of a more dreadful nature, and conſequence, than this of ſpiritual blindneſs; which will apppear by conſidering,

Firſt, The ſubject of this judgment, which is the ſoul, and

the principal power of the ſoul, which is the mind, and underſtanding faculty; the ſoul is the moſt precious and invaluable part of man, and the mind is the ſuperior and moſt noble power of the ſoul; it is to the ſoul what the eye is to the body, the directive faculty. The bodily eye is a curious, tender, and moſt precious part of the body. When we would expreſs the value of a thing, we ſay, we prize it as our eyes. The loſs of the eyes is a ſore loſs, we loſe a great part of the comfort of this world by it. Yet ſuch an affliction (ſpeaking comparatively) is but a trifle to this. If our bodily eyes be blinded, we cannot ſee the ſun; but if our ſpiritual eye be blinded, we cannot ſee God, we wander in the paths of ſin, 1 John ii. 11. We are led blindfold to hell by Satan, as the Syrians were into Samaria, 2 Kings vi. 19, 20. And then our eyes, like theirs, will be opened to ſee our miſery, when it is too late. "The light of the "body is the eye, (ſaith Chriſt). If therefore thine eye be ſin-"gle, thy whole body ſhall be full of light; but if thine eye "be evil, thy whole body ſhall be full of darkneſs. If therefore "the light that is in thee be darkneſs, how great is that dark-"neſs?" Mat. vi. 22, 23. By the eye he means the practical judgment, the underſtanding faculty, which is the ſeat for principles, the common treaſury of rules of practice, according unto which a man's life is formed, and his way directed. If therefore that power of the ſoul be darkened, how great muſt that darkneſs be! For now the blind lead the blind, and both fall into the ditch. The blind judgment miſ-guides the blind affections, and both fall into hell. O what a ſad thing is it, that the devil ſhould lead that, that leads thee! That he ſhould ſit at the helm, and ſteer thy courſe to damnation! The blinding of this noble faculty precipitates the ſoul into the moſt dangerous courſes; perſecution, by this means, ſeems to be true zeal for God, John xvi. 2. "They that perſecute you, ſhall think "that they do God ſervice. Paul once thought verily with him-"ſelf, that he ought to do many things contrary to the name "of Jeſus of Nazareth," Acts xxvi. 9. *i. e.* He thought he had pleaſed God, when he was impriſoning and perſecutiug his people, as many do at this day; it will make a man to ſin conſcientiouſly, which is a very dangerous way of ſinning, and difficult to be reclaimed.

Secondly, It is a dreadful judgment, if we conſider the object about which the underſtanding is blinded, which is Jeſus Chriſt, and union with him; regeneration, and the nature and neceſſity thereof. For this blindneſs is not univerſal, but reſpective and particular. A man may have abundance of light and knowledge

in things natural and moral; but ſpiritual things are hidden from his eyes. Yea, a man may know ſpiritual things in a natural way, which encreaſeth his blindneſs; but he cannot diſcern them ſpiritually; this is a ſore judgment, and greatly to be bewailed. "Thou haſt hid theſe things, (ſaid Chriſt) from "the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes," Mat. xi. 25. Learned, and knowing men are ignorant of thoſe things, which very babes in Chriſt underſtand. They are prudent in the management of earthly affairs; but to ſave their own ſouls they have no knowledge. They are able, with Berengarius, to diſpute *de omni ſcibili*, of every thing inveſtigable by the light of nature; yea, to open the ſcripture ſolidly, and defend the doctrines and truths of Chriſt againſt his adverſaries ſucceſsfully; and yet blinded in the great myſtery of regeneration, *Blindneſs in part*, (ſaith the apoſtle) *is happened unto Iſrael;* and that indeed was the principal part of knowledge, *viz.* the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified, we ſee farther than they. The literal knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt ſhines clearly in our underſtanding. We are only blinded about thoſe things which ſhould give us ſaving intereſt in him, about the effectual application of Chriſt to our own ſouls.

Thirdly, The dreadful nature of this ſpiritual blindneſs farther appears from the conſideration of the ſeaſon in which it befals men, which is the very time of God's patience, and the only opportunity they have for ſalvation; after theſe opportunities are over, their eyes will be opened to ſee their miſery, but alas, too late. Upon this account Chriſt ſhed thoſe tears over Jeruſalem, Luke xix. 42. "O that thou hadſt known, at "leaſt in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace; but "now they are hid from thine eyes." Now the ſeaſon of grace is paſt and gone; opportunities are the golden ſpots of time, and there is much time in a ſhort opportunity, as there are many pieces of ſilver in one piece of gold. Time ſignifies nothing when opportunities are gone; to be blinded in the very ſeaſon of ſalvation, is the judgment of all judgments, the greateſt miſery incident to man; to have our eyes opened when the ſeaſons of ſalvation are paſt, is but an aggravation of miſery: there is a twofold opening of men's eyes to ſee their danger, *viz.*

1. Graciouſly to prevent danger.
2. Judicially to aggravate miſery.

They whoſe eyes are not opened graciouſly in this world, to ſee their diſeaſe, and remedy in Chriſt, ſhall have their eyes opened judicially in the world to come, to ſee their diſeaſe with-

out any remedy. If God open them now, it is by way of prevention; if they be not opened till then, it will produce desperation.

Fourthly, The horrible nature of this judgment farther appears from the exceeding difficulty of curing it, especially in men of excellent natural endowments and accomplishments, John. ix. 40, 41. "And some of the Pharisees which were with "him, heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? "Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: "but now ye say, We see: therefore your sin remaineth," *q. d.* the pride and conceitedness of your hearts adds obstinacy and incurableness to your blindness; these are "the blind people that "have eyes;" Isa. xliii. 8. *In seeing they see not.* The conviction of such men is next to an impossibility.

Fifthly, The design and end of this blindness under the gospel is most dreadful *; so saith my text, "The god of this "world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, "lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image "of God, should shine unto them." Answerable whereunto are those words, Isa. vi. 10. "Make the heart of this people fat, and "make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with "their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their "hearts, and convert, and be healed." So that it is plain, this blinding is a *praeludium* to damnation, as the covering of Haman's face was to his destruction. When the Lord hath no purpose of grace and mercy to a man's soul, then to bring about the damnation of that man by a righteous permission; many occasions of blindness befal him, which Satan improves effectually unto his eternal ruin: among which fatal occasions, blind guides and scandalous professors are none of the least; they shall be fitted with ministers suitably to their humours, who shall speak smooth things: *If a man walk in the spirit and falshood, (i. e.* by an ψ δια δοσιν, ——the spirit of falsehood), *do lie, saying, I will prophesy to thee of wine and strong drink, he shall even be the prophet of this people:* and the slips and falls of professors shall do the devil not a little service in this his fatal design; Matth. xviii. 7. "Wo to the world because of offences." This shall blind them, and harden them to purpose. Thus you see what a dreadful judgment this is, a stroke of God upon the soul,

* It is a sign of God's displeasure, when men understand not their faults, lest repentance follow. *Cypr. Ep.* 2. But to be smitten with blindness of mind, so as neither to know nor lament their faults, is a higher evidence of the displeasure of an angry God. *Cypr.*

which cuts off all the preſent comforts of Chriſt and religion from it, takes away the bridle of reſtraint from ſin, and makes way for the final ruin of the ſoul. A far greater judgment it is than the greateſt calamity or affliction which can befal us in this world. If our names ſuffer by the greateſt reproaches, our bodies by the moſt painful diſeaſes, our eſtates by the greateſt loſſes; if God ſtrike every comfort we have in this world dead by affliction: all this is nothing, compared with this blinding judgment of God upon the ſoul; for they may come from the tender love of God to us, Heb. xii. 6. but this is the effect of his wrath; they may cleanſe ſin, Iſa. xxvii. 9. but this increaſes it; they often prove occaſions of converſion, Job xxxvi. 8, 9. but this is the great obſtruction to it. In a word, they only wound the fleſh, and that with a curable wound; but this ſtabs the ſoul, and that with a mortal wound.

Firſt uſe, of information.

Infer. 1. If this be the caſe of the unbelieving world, to be ſo blinded by the god of this world; *How little ſhould we value the cenſures and ſlanders of this blind world?* Certainly they ſhould move no other affection but pity in our ſouls: if their eyes were opened, their mouths would be ſhut; they would never traduce religion, and the ſincere profeſſion of it, as they do, if Satan had not blinded their minds: they ſpeak evil of the things they know not; their reproaches, which they let fly ſo freely, are but ſo many arrows ſhot by the blind man's bow, which only ſtick in our cloaths, and can do us no hurt, except we thruſt them onward by our own diſcontent, to the wounding of our ſpirits. "* I could almoſt be proud upon it, ſaid "Luther, that I have got an ill name among the worſt of men." Beware, Chriſtians, that you give them no occaſion to blaſpheme the name of your God, and then never trouble yourſelves, however they uſe your names. If they tread it in the dirt now, God, (as one ſpeaks), will take it up, waſh off all the dirt, and deliver it you again clear and ſhining. Should ſuch men ſpeak well of us, we might juſtly ſuſpect ourſelves of ſome iniquity which adminiſters to them the occaſions of it.

Infer. 2. *How abſurd and dangerous muſt it be for Chriſtians to follow the examples of the blind world?* Let the blind follow the blind, but let not thoſe whom God hath enlightned do ſo. Chriſtians, never let thoſe lead you, who are led blindfold by

* *Superbus fio, quod video nomen peſſimum mihi creſcere.* Luther. *Gratias ago Deo meo, quod dignus ſum quem mundus oderit.* Hieron.

the devils themſelves. The holineſs and heavenlineſs of Chriſtians was wont to ſet the world a wondering that they would not run with them into the ſame exceſs of riot, 1 Pet iv. 4. But ſure, ſince God hath opened your eyes, and ſhewed you the dangerous courſes they walk in, it would be the greateſt wonder of all, if you ſhould be the companions of ſuch men, and tread in the ſteps of their examples. Chriſtian, as humble and lowly thoughts as thou haſt of thyſelf, yet I would have thee underſtand thyſelf to be too good to be the aſſociate of ſuch men. *Diſcamus ſanctam ſuperbiam, et ſciamus nos eſſe illis meliores.* If they will walk with you in the way of duty and holineſs, let them come and welcome: receive them with both arms, and be glad of their company; but beware you walk not in their paths, leſt they be a ſnare unto you. Did they ſee the end of their way, they would never walk in it themſelves; why then will you walk with them who do ſee it?

Infer. 3. If this be ſo, *Let Chriſtians be exact and circumſpect in their walking, leſt they lay a ſtumbling-block before the blind.* It is a great ſin to do ſo in a proper ſenſe, Lev. xix. 14. "Thou "ſhalt not put a ſtumbling block before the blind." And a far greater to do it in a metaphorical ſenſe, Rom. xiv. 13. It is the expreſs will of God, "that no man put a ſtumbling-block, "or an occaſion to fall in his brother's way." It is an argument of little regard to the honour of Chriſt, or the ſouls of men, ſo to do. O profeſſors, look to your ſteps; the devil deſires to make uſe of you for ſuch purpoſes. The ſins of thouſands of others, who make no profeſſion of godlineſs, will never ſo fit his purpoſe for the blinding of thoſe mens eyes, as the leaſt ſlip or failing of yours will do. It is the living bird that makes the beſt ſtale to draw others into the net: the groſſeſt wickedneſs of profane ſinners paſſeth away in ſilence, but all the neighbourhood ſhall ring with your miſcarriages. "A righte-"ous man falling down before the wicked, is as a troubled "fountain and a corrupt ſpring," Prov. xxv. 26. The ſcandalous falls of good men are like a bag of poiſon caſt by Satan into the ſpring from whence the whole town is ſupplied with water. You little know what miſchief you do, and how many blind ſinners may fall into hell by your occaſion.

Infer. 4. *How dangerous a thing is zeal in a wicked man?* It is like a ſharp ſword in a blind man's hand, or like high mettle in a blind horſe. How much hath the church of God ſuffered upon this account, and doth ſuffer at this day: The world hath ever been full of ſuch blind and bluſtering zeal, which, like a hurricane, overturns all that ſtands in its way: yea, as we

noted before, it makes a man a kind of conſcientious perſecutor. I confeſs it is better for the perſecutor himſelf to do it ignorantly, becauſe ignorance leaves him in a capacity for mercy, and ſets him a degree lower than the malicious enlightned perſecutor, 1 Tim. i. 13. elſe it were the dreadful caſe deſcribed in Heb. x. But yet, as it is John xvi. 2. theſe are the fierce and dreadful enemies of the church of God. Such a man was Paul, a devout perſecutor, and ſuch perſecution God afterward ſuffered to befal himſelf, Acts xiii. 50. "But the Jews "ſtirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief "men of that city; and raiſed perſecution againſt Paul and "Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coaſts." An erroneous conſcience binds, as well as an informed conſcience; and wherever God gives ſuch men opportunity to vent the ſpleen and rage of their hearts upon his people, they will be ſure to do it to purpoſe. With other men Gamaliel's counſel may have ſome influence, and they may be afraid leſt they be found fighters againſt God; but blind zeal ſpurs on, and ſaith, as Jehu did, "Come, ſee my zeal for the Lord of Hoſts." O blind ſinners, be ſure of your mark before you diſcharge your arrows. If you ſhoot at a wicked man, as you ſuppoſe him, and God finds one of his dear children wounded or deſtroyed, what account will you give of that fact to God when you ſhall come before his judgment-ſeat?

Second uſe, of exhortation.

This point is very improveable by way of exhortation. Both,

1. Unto thoſe who are blinded by the god of this world.

2. To thoſe that are enlightened in the knowledge of Chriſt, by the true God.

Firſt, To thoſe who are ſtill blinded by the god of this world, to whom the Lord hath not given unto this day eyes to ſee their miſery in themſelves, or their remedy in Chriſt, ſo as to make an effectual application of him to their own ſouls. To all ſuch my counſel is,

1. To get a ſenſe of your own blindneſs.

2. To ſeek out for a cure, whilſt yet it may be had.

Firſt, Labour to get a deep ſenſe of the miſery of ſuch a condition; for till you be awakened by conviction, you can never be healed. O that you did but know the true difference betwixt common and ſaving light; the want of this keeps you in darkneſs: you think becauſe you know the ſame things that the moſt unſanctified man doth, that therefore there is no difference betwixt his knowledge and yours; and are therefore ready to ſay to them, as Job to his friends; "Lo, mine eye hath

" ſeen all this, mine ear hath heard, and underſtood it: what " ye know, the ſame do I know alſo; I am not inferior unto " you," Job xiii. 1, 2. But O that you would be convinced that your knowledge vaſtly differs from the knowledge of believers. Though you know the ſame things that they do, it is a knowledge of another kind and nature. You know ſpiritual things in another way, merely by the light of reaſon, aſſiſted, and improved by the common light of the goſpel; they know the ſame things by ſpiritual illumination, and in an experimental way. 1 John ii. 20. " Ye have an unction from the holy " One, and ye know all things." Their knowledge is practical, yours is idle. They are working out their ſalvation by that light which God hath given them, Pſal. cxi. 10. Their knowledge of God, and Chriſt, produces the fruits of faith, obedience, and mortification, and heavenly-mindedneſs in them: it hath no ſuch fruits in you; whatever light there be in your underſtandings, it makes no alteration at all upon your hearts. The light brings them to heaven, John xvii. 3. Yours ſhall be blown out by death, 1 Cor. xiii. 8. and yourſelves left in the miſts of eternal darkneſs; except your eyes be opened ſeaſonably by the anointing of the Holy Ghoſt. Conviction is a great part of your cure.

Secondly, Labour to get a remedy for this dangerous diſeaſe of your minds: " Awake to righteouſneſs, and ſin not, for ſome " have not the knowledge of God: I ſpeak this to your ſhame," 1 Cor. xv. 34. Theſe things ſpeak encouragement to you, though it be a ſore judgment that lies upon you, and very difficult to be removed: yet remember Jeſus Chriſt is commiſſioned by God the Father, to open the blind eyes, Iſa. xlii. 6, 7. and this excellent phyſician beſpeaks you for his patients, Rev. iii. 18. " Anoint thine eyes, (ſaith he) with eye-ſalve that thou " mayeſt ſee." Yea, the moſt enlightened Chriſtians were once as dark and blind, in ſpiritual things, as you are, and Chriſt hath cured them, Eph. v. 8. " Once were you darkneſs, now " are ye light in the Lord." Attend therefore upon the ordinances of the goſpel diligently; that is God's enlightening inſtrument, by which he couches thoſe cataracts which blind the eyes of mens underſtandings, Acts xxvi. 28. And if ever you will have your eyes opened, allow yourſelves time to ponder, and conſider what you hear. The duty of meditation is a very enlightening duty: above all, cry to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as that poor man did, " Lord, that mine eyes may be opened, that " I may receive my ſight." Say, Lord, this is my diſeaſe, and danger, that in ſeeing I ſee not. Others ſee natural things in a

ſpiritual way, whilſt I ſee ſpiritual things only in a natural way: Their light is operative upon their hearts, mine is but an idle impractical notion of religion, which brings forth no fruit of holineſs. Their knowledge ſets their hands a work in duties of obedience; mine only ſets my tongue a work in diſcourſes of thoſe things which my heart never felt. Lord, open mine eyes, and make me to ſee out of this obſcurity: All the light that is in me is but darkneſs. O Lord, enlighten my darkneſs, enlighten mine eyes, leſt I ſleep the ſleep of death.

Secondly, Let it be a word of counſel, and exhortation to ſuch as once were blind, but do now ſee.

Firſt, I beſeech you, bleſs God for the leaſt degree of ſpiritual illumination. "Truly light is ſweet, and it is a pleaſant "thing for the eyes to behold the ſun," Eccleſ. xi. 7. But oh, how ſweet is ſpiritual light! and what a pleaſant thing to behold the ſun of righteouſneſs! Bleſſed are your eyes, for they ſee God hath brought you out of darkneſs into marvellous light. And marvellous indeed it muſt needs be, when you conſider how many wiſe and prudent men are under the power of ſpiritual darkneſs, whilſt ſuch babes as you are enlightened, Mat. xi. 25. It greatly affected the heart of Chriſt, O let it affect yours alſo.

Secondly, Labour to get a clearer ſight of ſpiritual things every day. For all ſpiritual light is encreaſing light, "which "ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day," Prov. iv. 18. O! if a little ſpiritual light be ſo comfortable, what would more be? The wiſdom of God is *a manifold wiſdom*, Eph. iii. 10. The beſt of us ſee but little of it. Labour therefore to know ſpiritual things more *extenſively*, and more experimentally, Phil. iii. 8, 9. Be ſtill increaſing in the knowledge of God.

Thirdly, Walk as men whoſe eyes are opened. "Once ye "were in darkneſs, now are ye light in the Lord; walk as chil-"dren of the light," Eph. v. 8. elſe your light will but aggravate your ſin. Remember how it diſpleaſed God, that Solomon's heart was turned from the Lord God of *Iſrael who appeared to him twice*, 1 Kings xi. 9. Remember how angry God was with the Heathens for abuſing the dim common light of nature, Rom. i. 21. How much more evil is it in you to abuſe the moſt precious light that ſhineth in this world? And what miſchievous effects the abuſe of your light will have upon this blind world? It was a ſmart rebuke given once by an Atheiſt to a good man, who being aſked by him, how he could ſatisfy his

conſcience to live as he did? Nay rather ſaid the Atheiſt, I wonder how you can ſatisfy yourſelf to live as you do; for did *I* believe as you do, that there is ſuch a Chriſt, and ſuch a glory as you believe there is, I would pray, and live at another rate than you do.

The Concluſion.

And now, reader, after all my diſcourſes of the method of Chriſt in purchaſing the great ſalvation for us, and the way of the Spirit in applying it, and making it effectual to God's elect: thou haſt two wonders before thine eyes, either of which may aſtoniſh thy ſoul, in the conſideration of them, *viz.*

1. This admirable grace of God in preparing } this great
2. The deſperate wickedneſs of man in rejecting } Salvation.

Firſt, Behold the riches of the goodneſs, and mercy of God in preparing ſuch a remedy as this for loſt man. This is that which is juſtly called, "The great myſtery of godlineſs," 1 Tim. iii. 16. that myſtery which the *prophets* enquired diligently after, yea, which the "angels deſired to look into," 1 Pet. i. 10, 12. In this glorious myſtery of redemption that, πολυποικιλος σοφια, manifold wiſdom of God, or that wiſdom which hath ſuch curious, and admirable variety in it, is illuſtriouſly diſplayed, Eph. iv. 10. Yea, the contrivance of our redemption, this way, is the moſt glorious diſplay of divine *love* that ever was made, or can be made, in this world to the children of men; for ſo the apoſtle will be underſtood, when he ſaith, Rom. v. 8. Συνιστησι την εαυτου αγαπην,——God hath ſet forth, or preſented his love to man in the moſt engaging manner, in a way that commends it beyond all compare, to the acceptation of men. "This is a faithful ſaying, "and worthy of all acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the "world to ſave ſinners," 1 Tim. i. 15. It might be juſtly expected, that when this glorious myſtery ſhould come to be publiſhed by the goſpel in the ears of ſinners, all eyes ſhould be withdrawn from all other objects, and fixed with admiration upon Chriſt; all hearts ſhould be raviſhed with theſe glad tidings; and every man preſſing to Chriſt with the greateſt zeal and diligence. But behold, inſtead thereof,

Secondly, The deſperate wickedneſs of the world, in rejecting the only remedy prepared for them. This was long ſince foretold by the prophet, Iſa. liii. 3. "He is deſpiſed and rejected of "men, * a man of ſorrows, acquainted with grief; and we "hid our faces from him; he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed "him not:" His poor and mean appearance, which ſhould en-

* אושים דוד *deſitio virorum.*

dear him beyond all conſiderations to the ſouls of men (ſince it was for their ſakes, that he emptied himſelf of all his glory) yet this lays him under contempt, he is looked on as the very off-caſt of men †, when his own love to man had emptied him of all his riches, the wickedneſs of men loaded him with contempt, and as it was propheſied of him, ſo it was, and, at this day is ſadly verified all the world over; for,

Firſt, The Pagan world hath no knowledge of him, they are loſt in darkneſs. "God hath ſuffered them to walk in their "own ways," Acts xiv. 16.

Secondly, The Mahometans which overſpread ſo great a part of the world reject him, and inſtead of the bleſſed goſpel, which they hiſs at with abhorrence, embrace the blaſphemous and ridiculous Alcoran, which they confidently affirm to have come down from God immediately in that *laylatto Hanzili* (as they call it) the night of demiſſion, calling all Chriſtians *Cafirauna*, (*i. e.*) Infidels.

Thirdly, The Jews reject him with abhorrence, and ſpit at his very name, and being blind-folded by the devil, they call Jeſus *Anathema*, 1 Cor. xii. 3. And in a blind zeal for Moſes, blaſpheme him as an impoſtor. "He came to his own, and his "own received him not," John i. 11.

Fourthly, The far greater part of the Chriſtianized world reject him ‡; thoſe that are called after his name, will not ſubmit to his government. The *nobles* of the world think themſelves diſhonoured by ſubmitting their necks to his yoke. The *ſenſualiſts* of the world will not deny their luſts, or forſake their pleaſures, for all the treaſures of righteouſneſs, life and peace, which his blood hath purchaſed. *Worldlings* of the earth prefer the dirt and dung of the world before him; and few there be among them that profeſs Chriſtianity, who love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity. The only reaſon why they are called Chriſtians is, becauſe by the advantageous caſt of providence, they were born and educated in a nation where Chriſtianity is profeſ-

† *Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in ſe,*
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit :-----
Juvenal. Sat. III, v. 152.
Want is the ſcorn of ev'ry wealthy fool;
And wit in rags is turn'd to ridicule.

‡ To put on a profeſſion of Chriſt's name, and not to walk in Chriſt's way, what is it but prevaricating with that divine name? *Cyp. de Zelo.*

ſed, and eſtabliſhed by the laws of the country; and if the wind ſhould turn, and the public authority think fit to eſtabliſh another religion, they can ſhift their ſail, and ſteer a contrary courſe.

But now, reader, let me tell thee, that if ever God ſend forth theſe two grim *ſerjeants*, his law, and thine own conſcience, to arreſt thee for thy ſins, if thou find thyſelf dragged away by them towards that priſon from whence none return, that are once clapt up therein, and that in this unſpeakable diſtreſs Jeſus Chriſt manifeſt himſelf to thy ſoul, and open thy heart to receive him, and become thy ſurety with God, pay all thy debts, and cancel all thy obligations, thou wilt love him at another rate than others do; his blood will run deeper in thine eyes than it doth in the ſhallow apprehenſions of the world; he will be *altogether lovely*, and thou wilt account all things but dung and droſs in compariſon of the excellency of Jeſus Chriſt thy Lord. To work thy heart to this frame, theſe things are written, which the Lord proſper upon thy ſoul, by the bleſſing of his good Spirit upon them.

Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.

PNEUMATOLOGIA.

A TREATISE OF THE SOUL OF MAN.

The EPISLTE DEDICATORY.

To the much honoured, his dear kinſman, Mr. JOHN FLAVEL, and Mr. EDWARD CRISPE, of London, Merchants; and the reſt of my worthy friends in London, RATCLIFFE, SHADWELL, and LYME-HOUSE, grace, mercy, and peace.

Dear Friends,

" AMONG all the creatures in this lower world, none " deſerves to be ſtiled *great*, but *man;* and in *man* " nothing is found worthy of that epithet, but his " *ſoul* *."

The ſtudy, and knowledge of his *ſoul* was, therefore, always reckoned a rich, and neceſſary improvement of time. All ages have magnified theſe two words, " *Know thyſelf*, as an *oracle* " deſcending from heaven †."

" No knowledge, ſaith Bernard ‡, is better than that where-" by we know ourſelves; leave other matters therefore, and " ſearch thyſelf; run through thyſelf, make a ſtand in thy-" ſelf; let thy thoughts, as it were, circulate, begin and end " in thyſelf." Strain not thy thoughts in vain about other things, thyſelf being neglected.

The ſtudy and knowledge of *Jeſus Chriſt* muſt ſtill be allowed to be the moſt excellent and neceſſary: But yet the worth,

* *Nihil in terra magnum præter hominem, nihil in homine præter mentem.* Favorin.

† —*E cœlo deſcendit, γνωθι σεαυτον.* Juvenal. Sat. 11. v. 27.

‡ *Nulla ſcientia melior illa, qua homo novit ſeipſum; relinque ergo cætera, et teipſum diſcute: per te curre, in te conſiſte; a te incipiat cogitatio tua, et in te finiatur.*

and neceſſity of *Chriſt* is unknown to men, till the value, wants, and dangers of their own *ſouls* be firſt diſcovered to them.

The diſaffectedneſs, and averſation of men to the ſtudy of their own ſouls, is the more to be admired; not only becauſe of the weight and neceſſity of it, but the alluring pleaſure, and ſweetneſs that is found therein. What ‖ Cardan ſpeaks, is experimentally felt by many, "That ſcarce any thing is more "pleaſant and delectable to the ſoul of man, than to know "what he is, what he may, and ſhall be; and what thoſe di-"vine and ſupreme things are, which he is to enjoy after death, "and the viciſſitudes of this preſent world." For we are creatures conſcious to ourſelves of an immortal nature, and that we have ſomething about us which muſt overlive this mortal fleſh, and therefore is ever and anon ſome way or other hinting, and intimating to us its expectations of, and deſignation for a better life than that it now lives in the body, and that we ſhall not ceaſe to *be*, when we ceaſe to *breathe*.

And certainly, my friends, diſcourſes of the ſoul, and its immortality; of *heaven*, and of *hell*, the next, and only receptacles of unbodied ſpirits, were never more ſeaſonable, and neceſſary than in this atheiſtical age of the world, wherein all ſerious piety, and thoughts of immortality are ridiculed, and hiſſed out of the company of many: As if thoſe old condemned Heretics, the Θνητοψυχιται, who aſſerted the corruptibility, and mortality of the ſoul as well as body, had been again revived in our days.

And as the *Atheiſm* of ſome, ſo the *tepidity*, and unconcerned careleſneſs of the moſt, needs and calls for ſuch potent remedies, as diſcourſes of this kind do plentifully afford. I dare appeal to your charitable judgments, whether the converſations and diſcourſes of the *many*, do indeed look like a ſerious *purſuit* of heaven, and a *flight* from hell?

Long have my thoughts bended towards this great and excellent *ſubject*, and many earneſt deſires I have had, (as I believe all thinking perſons muſt needs have) to know what I ſhall be when I breathe not. But when I had engaged my meditations about it, two great rubs oppoſed the farther progreſs of my thoughts therein: Namely,

I. The difficulty of the ſubject I had choſen: And

II. The diſtractions of the times in which I was to write upon it.

‖ *Quid jucundius quam ſcire quid ſimus, quid fuerimus, quid erimus, et cum his etiam divina atque ſuprema illa poſt obitum mundique viciſſitudines.*

I. As for the subject, such is the subtility and sublimity of its nature, and such the knotty controversies in which it is involved, that it much better deserves that *inscription*, than *Minerva*'s temple at *Saum* did, * "*Never did any mortal reveal* "*me plainly.*"

"It is but little that the most clear, and sharp-sighted do dis-"cern of their own souls, now in the state of *composition*; and "what can we positively, and distinctly know of the life they "live in the state of separation? The darkness in which these "things are involved doth greatly exercise, even the greatest "wits, and frequently elude and frustrate the most generous "attempts †." Many great *scholars*, whose natural and acquired abilities singularly furnished and qualified them to make a clearer discovery, have laboured in this field, *usque ad sudorem et pallorem*, even to sweat and paleness, and done little more but intangle themselves, and the subject more than before; this cannot but discourage new attempts.

And yet, without some knowledge of the *hability*, and subjective capacity of our souls to enjoy the good of the world to come, even in a state of absence from the body, a principal relief must be cut off from them, under the great, and manifold trials they are to encounter in this evil world.

As for myself, I assure you, I am deeply sensible of the inequality of my shoulders to this burden; and have often thought (since I undertook it) of that grave and necessary caution of the poet ‡, to weild and poise the burden as *porters* use to do, before I undertook it. Zuinglius blamed Carolostadius (as some may do me) for undertaking the controversy of that age; because, saith he, *Non habet satis humerorum*; his shoulders are too weak for it.

And yet I know mens labours prosper not, according to the art and elegancy of the composure, but according to the divine

* Τον εμον πεπλον ουδεις πωθνητος απεκαλυψεν.

† *Animam præsentem mentis acie vix, aut ne vix quidem assequimur; sed qualis sit futura, quomodo indagabimus? Laborant hic maxima ingenia, et caligo conatus etiam generosos non raro eludit.* Jos. Stern. de morte, cap. 20.

‡ *Sumite materiam vestris, qui scribitis, æquam,*
Viribus: et versate diu, quid ferre recusent,
Quid valeant humeri—— Horat. de arte poet. l. 37.
Examine well, ye writers, weigh with care
What suits your genius, what your strength can bear;
For when a well-proportion'd theme you chuse,
Nor words nor method will their aid refuse.

bleſſing which pleaſeth to accompany them. Ruffinus tells us of a learend *philoſopher* at the *Council* of *Nice*, who ſtoutly defended his *theſis* againſt the greateſt wits, and ſcholars there, and yet was at laſt fairly vanquiſhed by a man of no extraordinary parts: of which conqueſt the *philoſopher* gave this candid, and ingenuous account; *Againſt words* (ſaid he) *I oppoſed words; and what was ſpoken, I overthrew by the art of ſpeaking: But when, inſtead of words, power came out of the mouth of the ſpeaker, words could no longer withſtand truth: nor man oppoſe the power of God.*

O that my weak endeavours might proſper, under the influence of the like ſpirit, upon the hearts of them that ſhall read this inartificial, but well-meant diſcourſe.

I am little concerned about the contempts and cenſures of faſtidious readers. I have reſolved to ſay nothing that exceeds ſobriety, nor to provoke any man, except my diſſent from his unproved dictates muſt be his provocation.

Perhaps there are ſome doubts, and difficulties relating to this ſubject, which will never fully be ſolved till we come to heaven. For man, by the fall, being leſs than himſelf, doth not underſtand himſelf, nor will ever perfectly do ſo, until he be fully reſtored to himſelf; which will not be whilſt he dwells in a body of ſin and death. And yet it is to me paſt doubt, that this, as well as other ſubjects, might have been much more cleared than it is, if inſtead of the proud contendings of maſterly wits for victory, all had humbly, and peaceably applied themſelves to the impartial ſearch of truth.

Truth, like an orient pearl in the bottom of a river, would have diſcovered itſelf by its native luſtre, and radiancy, had not the feet of Heathen *philoſophers*, cunning Atheiſts, and daring ſchool *divines*, diſturbed and fouled the ſtream.

II. And as the difficulties of the ſubject are many, ſo many have been the interruptions and avocations I have met with, whilſt it was under my hand: Which I mention for no other end but to procure a more favourable cenſure from you, if it appears leſs exact than you expected to find it. Such as it is, I do with much reſpect and affection, tender to your hands, humbly requeſting the bleſſing of the Spirit may accompany it to your hearts. If you will but allow yourſelves to think cloſe to the matter before you, I doubt not but you may find ſomewhat in it apt, both to inform your minds, and quicken your affections. I know you have a multiplicity of buſineſs under your hands, but yet I hope your great concern makes all others daily to give place; and that how clamorous, and importunate ſoever the af-

fairs of this world be, you both can, and do, find time to ſit alone, and bethink yourſelves of a much more important buſineſs you have to do.

My friends, we are borderers upon eternity, we live upon the confines of the ſpiritual and immaterial world: we muſt ſhortly be aſſociate with bodileſs beings, and ſhall have, after a few days are paſt, no more concerns for meat, drink, and ſleep, buying and ſelling, habitations and relations, than the angels of God now have. Beſides, we live here in a ſtate of trial: Man, (as Scaliger fitly calls him), is *utriuſque mundi nexus*, One in whom both worlds do meet; his body participates of the lower, his ſoul of the upper world; hence it is, that he finds ſuch tugging and pulling this way and that way, upward and downward; both worlds, as it were, contending for this invaluable prize, the precious ſoul. All Chriſt's ordinances are inſtituted, and his officers ordained for no other uſe or end, but the ſalvation of ſouls. Books are valuable, according to their conducibility to this end: how rich a reward of my labours ſhall I account it, if this treatiſe of the ſoul may but promote the ſanctification and ſalvation of any reader's ſoul.

To your hands I firſt tender it: it becomes your property, not only as a debt of juſtice, the fulfilling of a promiſe made you long ſince, upon your joint and earneſt deſires for the publication of it; but, as an acknowledgement of the many favours I have received from you: To one of you I ſtand obliged in the bond of relation, and under the ſenſe of many kindneſſes, beyond whatever ſuch a degree of relation can be ſuppoſed to exact.

You have here a ſuccinct account of the nature, faculties and original of the ſoul of man, as alſo of its infuſion into the body by God, without intitling himſelf to the guilt and ſin reſulting from that their union.

You will alſo find the breath of your noſtrils to be the *nexus*, tie, or bond, which holds our ſouls and bodies in perſonal union; and that, whilſt the due craſis and temperament of the body remains, and breath continues, your ſouls hang, as by a weak and ſlender thread, over the ſtate of a vaſt eternity in heaven or in hell; which will inform you both of the value of your breath, and the beſt way of improving it, whilſt you enjoy it.

The immortality of the ſoul is here aſſerted, proved, and vindicated from the moſt conſiderable objections; ſo that it will evidently appear to you, by this diſcourſe, you do not ceaſe to *be*, when you ceaſe to *breathe*: and, ſeeing they will overlive all

temporal enjoyments, they muſt neceſſarily periſh as to all their joys, comforts, and hopes, (which is all the death that can be incident to an immortal ſpirit), if they be not in the proper ſeaſon ſecured and provided of that never periſhing food of ſouls, God in Chriſt, their portion for ever.

Here you will find the grounds and reaſons of that ſtrong inclination, which you all feel them to have to your bodies, and the neceſſity, notwithſtanding that, of their divorce and ſeparation from their beloved bodies; and that it would manifeſtly be to their prejudice, if it ſhould be otherwiſe: and to overcome the unreaſonable averſations of believers, and to bring them to a more becoming cheerful ſubmiſſion to the laws of death, whenſoever the writ of ejection ſhall be ſerved upon them; you will here find a repreſentation of that bleſſed life, comely order, and moſt delightful imployment of the incorporeal people inhabiting the city of God; wherein, beſide thoſe ſweet meditations, which are proper to feaſt your hungry affections, you will meet with divers unuſual, though not vain or unuſeful, queſtions ſtated and reſolved, which will be a grateful entertainment to your inquiſitive and ſearching minds.

It is poſſible they may be cenſured by ſome as undeterminable and unprofitable curioſities; but as I hate a preſumptuous intruſion into unrevealed ſecrets, ſo I think it is a weakneſs to be diſcouraged in the ſearch of truth, ſo far as it is fit to trace it, by ſuch damping and cauſeleſs cenſures. Nor am I ſenſible I have in any thing tranſgreſſed the bounds of Chriſtian ſobriety, to gratify the palate of a nice and delicate reader.

I have alſo here ſet before the reader an idea, or repreſentation of the ſtate and caſe of damned ſouls, that, if it be the will of God, a ſeaſonable diſcovery of hell may be the means of ſome men's recovery out of the danger of it; and cloſed up the whole with a demonſtration of the invaluable preciouſneſs of ſouls, and the ſeveral dangerous ſnares and artifices of Satan, their profeſſed enemy, to deſtroy and caſt them away for ever.

This is the deſign and general ſcope of the whole, and of the principal parts of this treatiſe. And, O that God would grant me my hearts deſire, on your behalf, in the peruſal of it! Even that it may prove a ſanctified inſtrument in his hand, both to prepare you for, and bring you in love with the unbodied life, to make you look with pleaſure into your graves, and die by conſent of will, as well as neceſſity of nature. I remember Dr. Stoughton, in a ſermon preached before king James, relates a ſtrange ſtory of a little child in a ſhipwreck, faſt aſleep upon its mother's lap, as ſhe ſat upon a piece of the wreck amidſt the

waves; the child being awaked with the noiſe, aſked the mother what thoſe things were? She told it, They were drowning waves to ſwallow them up. The child, with a pretty ſmiling countenance, begg'd a ſtroke from its mother to beat away thoſe naughty waves, and chide them as if they had been its play-mates. Death will ſhortly ſhipwreck your bodies; your ſouls will ſit upon your lips ready to expire, as they upon the wreck ready to go down. Would it not be a comfortable and moſt becoming frame of mind, to ſit there with as little dread, as this little one did among the terrible waves? Surely, if our faith had but firſt united us with Chriſt, and then looſed our hearts off from this enchanting and enſnaring world, we might make a fair ſtep towards this moſt deſireable temper; but unbelief and earthly-mindedneſs make us loth to venture.

I bluſh to think, what bold adventures thoſe men made, who, upon the contemplation of the properties of a deſpicable ſtone, firſt adventured quite out of ſight of land, under its conduct and direction, and ſecurely truſted both their lives and eſtates to it, when all the eyes of heaven were veiled from them, amidſt the dark waters, and thick clouds of the ſky, when I either ſtart, or at leaſt give an unwilling ſhrug, when I think of adventuring out of ſight of this world, under the more ſure and ſteady direction and conduct of faith and the promiſes. To cure theſe evils, in my own and the reader's heart, theſe things are written, and in much reſpect, and love tendered to your hands, as a teſtimony of my gratitude, and deep ſenſe of the many obligations you have put me under. That the bleſſing of the Spirit may accompany theſe diſcourſes to your ſouls, afford you ſome aſſiſtance in your laſt and difficult work, of putting them off at death with a becoming chearfulneſs, ſaying in that hour, Can I not ſee God till this fleſh be laid aſide in the grave? muſt I die before I can live like myſelf? then die my body, and go to thy duſt, that I may be with Chriſt. With this deſign, and with theſe hearty wiſhes, dear and honoured couſin, and worthy friends, I put theſe diſcourſes into your hands, and remain,

Your moſt obliged

kinſman and ſervant,

JOHN FLAVEL.

THE PREFACE.

AMONG many other largeſſes and rich endowments, beſtowed by the Creator's bounty upon the *ſoul of man*, the * *ſentiments* and impreſſions of the world to come, and the ability of *reflexion and ſelf-intuition*, are peculiar, invaluable, and heavenly gifts. By the former, we have a very great evidence of our own immortality, and deſignation for nobler employments and enjoyments than this embodied ſtate admits. And by the latter, we may diſcern the agreeableneſs of our hearts, and therein the validity of our title to that expected bleſſedneſs.

But theſe heavenly gifts are neglected and abuſed all the world over. Degenerate ſouls are every where fallen into ſo deep an oblivion of their excellent original, ſpiritual and immortal nature, and alliance to the Father of ſpirits; that (to uſe the upbraiding expreſſion of a great † philoſopher) "they ſeem "to be buried in their bodies, as ſo many ſilly worms that lurk "in their holes, and are loth to peep forth, and look abroad."

So powerfully do the cares and pleaſures of this world charm all, (except a ſmall remnant of regenerate ſouls), that nothing but ſome ſmart ſtroke of calamity, or terrible meſſengers of death can ſtartle them; (and even thoſe are not always able to do it), and when they do, all the effect is but a tranſient glance at another, and an unwilling ſhrug to leave this world, and ſo to ſleep again. And thus the impreſſions and ſentiments of the world to come (which are the natural growth and offſpring of the ſoul) are either ſtifled and ſuppreſt, as in Atheiſts; or born down by impetuous maſterly luſts, as in Senſualiſts.

And for its ſelf-reflecting and conſidering power, it ſeems in many to be a power received in vain. It is with moſt ſouls as it is with the eye, which ſees not itſelf, though it ſees all other objects. There be thoſe that have almoſt finiſhed the courſe of a long life, (wherein a great part of their time hath lain upon their hands, as a cheap and uſeleſs commodity, which they knew not

* We have demonſtrated from the common conſent of all nations and people, ſince the creation of the world, eſpecially from the conſent of the good and learned, that the human ſoul is incorruptible and immortal; and that therefore it ſurvives the corrupted body, that it may be for ever either rewarded for good actions, or puniſhed for bad actions. *Zanch. on the immortality of the ſoul.*

† Η δε δυλη ψυχη καλοφωλυγμενη εν σωματι ως εν τινι τυφλω ταφω φωλευει, &c. Max. Tyr. Diſſ. 41.

what to do with) who yet never ſpent one ſolemn entire hour in diſcourſe with their own ſouls ‡. What ſerious heart doth not melt into compaſſion over the deluded multitude, who are mocked with dreams, and perpetually buſied about trifles? Who are (after ſo many fruſtrated attempts, both of their own, and all paſt ages) eagerly purſuing the fleeting ſhadows, who torture and rack their brains to find out the natures and qualities of birds, beaſts, and plants; indeed any thing rather than their own ſouls, which are certainly the moſt excellent creatures that inhabit this world. They know the true value and worth of other things, but are not able to eſtimate the dignity of that high-born ſpirit which is within them. A ſpirit which (without the addition of any more natural faculties or powers, if thoſe it hath be but ſanctified and devoted to God) is capable of the higheſt perfections and fruitions, even complete conformity to God, and the ſatisfying viſions of God throughout eternity. They herd themſelves with beaſts, who are capable of an equality with angels. O what compaſſionate tears muſt ſuch a conſideration as this draw from the eyes of all that underſtand the worth of ſouls!

As for me, it hath been my ſin, and is now the matter of my ſorrow, that whilſt myriads of ſouls (of no higher original than mine) are ſome of them beholding the higheſt Majeſty in heaven, and others giving all diligence to make ſure their ſalvation on earth; I was carried away ſo many years in the courſe of this world (like a drop with the current of the tide) wholly forgetting my beſt ſelf, my invaluable ſoul; whilſt I prodigally waſted the ſtores of my time and thoughts upon vanities, that long ſince paſſed away as the waters which are remembered no more ‖. It ſhall be no ſhame to me to confeſs this folly, ſince the matter of my confeſſion ſhall go to the glory of my God. I ſtudied to know many other things, but I knew not myſelf. It was with me as with a ſervant to whom the maſter commited two things, *viz.* the *child*, and the *child's cloaths*; the ſervant is very careful of the cloaths, bruſhes and waſhes, ſtarches and irons

‡ *Ita Dei eſt iſta vita mortalis, ubi homo vanitati ſimilis factus eſt; et dieſt ejus velut umbra præterunt.* Aug. de Civ. lib. 21. c. 24.

‖ Saints after their hearts are renewed by repentance, are not aſhamed to acknowledge their ignominious faults, to the glory of God. For nothing is loſt to us that redounds to his praiſe, who pardoning our ſins, transfers us from miſery to happineſs. *Brightman on Cant. p.* 12.

them, and keeps them safe and clean, but the child is forgotten and lost. My body which is but the garment of my soul, I kept and nourished with excessive care, but my soul was long forgotten, and had been lost for ever, as others daily are, had not God roused it, by the convictions of his Spirit, out of that deep oblivion and deadly slumber.

When the God that formed it, out of free grace to the work of his own hands, had thus recovered it to a sense of its own worth and danger, my next work was to get it united with Christ, and thereby secured from the wrath to come; which I found to be a work difficult to effect, (if it be yet effected), and a work of time to clear, though but to the degree of good hope through grace.

And since the hopes and evidences of salvation began to spring up in my soul, and settle the state thereof, I found these three great words, *viz. Christ, soul,* and *eternity,* to have a far different, and more awful sound in my ear, than ever they used to have. I looked on them from that time, as things of the greatest certainty, and most awful solemnity. These things have laid some weight upon my thoughts, and I felt, at certain seasons, a strong inclination to sequester myself from all other studies, and spend my last days, and most fixed meditations upon these three great and weighty subjects.

I know the subject matter of my studies and enquiries (be it never so weighty) doth not therefore make my meditations and discourse upon it great and weighty: nor am I such a vain *opinionator,* as to imagine my discourses every way suitable to the dignity of such subjects; no, no, the more I think and study about them, the more I discern the indistinctness, darkness, crudity, and confusion of my own conceptions, and expression of such great and transcendent things as those: but, *In magnis voluisse sat est,* I resolved to do what I could: and accordingly some years past I finished and published, in two parts, the *Doctrine of Christ;* and by the acceptation and success the Lord gave that, he hath encouraged me to go on in this second part of my work, how unequal soever my shoulders are to the burden of it.

The *nature, original, immortality,* and *capacity* of mine own soul, for the present lodged in and related to this vile body, destined to corruption; together with its *existence, employment, perfection, converse with God,* and other *spirits,* both of its own, and of a superior rank and order, when it shall (as I know it shortly must) *put off this its tabernacle;* these things have a long time been the matters of my limited desires to un-

derſtand, ſo far as I could ſee the pillar of fire (God in his word) enlightening my way to the knowledge of them. Yea, ſuch is the value I have for them, that I have given them the next place in my eſteem, to the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, and my intereſt in him.

God hath formed me, as he hath other men, a *proſpecting creature*. I feel myſelf yet uncentered, and ſhort of that ſtate of reſt and ſatisfaction to which my ſoul, in its natural and ſpiritual capacity, hath a deſignation. I find that I am in a continual motion towards my everlaſting abode, and the expence of my time; and many infirmities tell me that I am not far from it: by all which I am ſtrongly prompted to look forward, and acquaint my ſelf as much as I can, with my next place and employment. I look with a greedy and inquiſitive eye that way.

Yet would I not be guilty of an unwarrantable curioſity in ſearching into revealed things; how willing ſoever I am to put my head by faith into the world above, and to know the things which Jeſus Chriſt hath purchaſed and prepared for me, and all the reſt that are waiting for his appearance and kingdom. I feel my curioſity checked and repreſſed by that elegant *paronomaſia*, Rom. xii. 3. Μη υπερφρονειν παρ ο δει φρονειν, αλλα φρονειν εις το σωφρονειν, In all things I would be wiſe unto ſobriety. I groan under the effects of Adam's itching ambition to *know*, and would not by repeating his ſin, encreaſe my own miſery; nor yet would I be ſcared, by his example, into the contrary evil of neglecting the means God hath afforded me, to know all that I can of his revealed will.

* The helps philoſophy affords in ſome parts of this diſcourſe, are too great to be deſpiſed, and too ſmall to be admired. I confeſs I read the definitions of the ſoul given by the antient philoſophers, with a compaſſionate ſmile. When Thales calls it *a nature without repoſe*; Aſclepiades, *an exercitation of ſenſe*; Heſiod, *a thing compoſed of earth and water*; Parmenides, *a thing compoſed of earth and fire*; Galen ſaith it is *heat*; Hippocrates, *a ſpirit diffuſed through the body*; Plato, *a ſelf-moving ſubſtance*; Ariſtotle calls it *Entelechia, that by which the body is moved*: If my opinion ſhould be aſked, which of all theſe definitions I like beſt, I ſhould give the ſame anſwer which Theocritus gave an ill poet, repeating many of his verſes, and ask-

* For to whom is the truth known with certainty without God? or God without Chriſt? or Chriſt explorated without the Spirit? or the Spirit vouchſafed without faith? *Tertullian on the ſoul.*

ing which he liked beſt; *Thoſe* (ſaid he) *which you have omitted.* Or if they muſt have the garland as the prize they have ſhot for, let them have it upon the ſame reaſon that was once given to him that always ſhot wide. *Difficilius eſt toties non attingere,* Becauſe it was the greateſt difficulty to aim ſo often at the mark, and never come near it. One word of God gives me more light than a thouſand ſuch laborious trifles. As Caeſar was beſt able to write his own *commentaries,* ſo God only can give the beſt account of his own creature, on which he hath impreſſed his own image.

Modern philoſophers, aſſiſted by the divine oracles, muſt needs come cloſer to the mark, and give us a far better account of the nature of the ſoul. Yet I have endeavoured not to cloud this ſubject with their controverſies, or abſtruſe notions; remembring what a ſmart, but deſerved check, Tertullian gives thoſe, *Qui Platonicum et Ariſtotelicum Chriſtianiſmum producunt Chriſtianis.* Words are but the ſervants of matter, I value them as merchants do their ſhips, not by the gilded head and ſtern, the neatneſs of their mould, or curious flags and ſtreamers, but by the ſoundneſs of their bottom, largeneſs of their capacity, and richneſs of their cargo and loading. The quality of this ſubject neceſſitates, in many places, the uſe of ſcholaſtic terms, which will be obſcure to the vulgar reader: but apt and proper words muſt not be rejected for their obſcurity, except plainer words could be found that fit the ſubject as well, and are as fully expreſſive of the matter. The unneceſſary I have avoided, and the reſt explained as I could.

The principal fruits I eſpecially aim at, both to my own and the reader's ſoul, are, That whilſt we contemplate the freedom, pleaſure, and ſatisfaction of that ſpiritual, incorporeal people, who dwell in the region of light and joy, and are hereby forming to ourſelves a true ſcriptural idea of the bleſſed ſtate of thoſe diſembodied ſpirits, with whom we are to ſerve, and converſe in the temple-worſhip in heaven; and come more explicitly and diſtinctly to underſtand the conſtitution, order, and delightful employments of thoſe our everlaſting aſſociates; we may anſwerably feel the ſound and inordinate love of this animal life ſubacted and wrought down; the frightful vizard of death drop off, and a more pleaſing aſpect appear; that no upright ſoul that ſhall read theſe diſcourſes may henceforth be convulſed at the name of death, but chearfully aſpire, and with a pleaſant expectation wait for the bleſſed ſeaſon of its tranſportation to that bleſſed aſſembly. It is certainly our ignorance of the life of heaven, that makes us dote as we do upon the preſent life. There

is a gloom, a thick miſt overſpreading the next life, and hiding, even from the eyes of believers, the glory that is there. We ſend forth our thoughts to penetrate this cloud, but they return to us without the deſired ſucceſs. We reinforce them with a ſally of new and more vigorous thoughts, but ſtill they come back in confuſion and diſappointment, as to any perfect account they can bring us from thence; though the oftner and cloſer we think, ſtill the more we grow up into acquaintance with theſe excellent things.

Another benefit I pray for, and expect from theſe labours, is, that by deſcribing the horrid eſtate of thoſe ſouls which go the other way, and ſhewing to the living the diſmal condition of ſouls departed in their unregenerate ſtate; ſome may be awakened to a ſeaſonable and effectual conſideration of their wretched condition, whilſt they yet continue under the means and among the inſtruments of their ſalvation.

Whatever the fruit of this diſcourſe ſhall be to others, I have cauſe to bleſs God for the advantage it hath already given me. I begin to find more than ever I have done, in the ſeparate ſtate of ſanctified ſouls, all that is capable of attracting an intellectual nature; and if God will but fix my mind upon this ſtate, and cauſe my pleaſed thoughts about it to ſettle into a ſteddy frame and temper, I hope I ſhall daily more and more depreciate and deſpiſe this common way of exiſtence in a corporeal priſon; and when the bleſſed ſeaſon of my departure is at hand, I ſhall take a chearful farewel of the greater and leſſer elementary world, to which my ſoul hath been confined, and have an abundant entrance through the broad gate of aſſurance, unto the bleſſed, unbodied inhabitants of the world to come.

A TREATISE OF THE SOUL OF MAN.

GEN. ii. 7. *And the Lord God formed man out of the duſt of the ground, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life; and man became a living ſoul.*

"THREE things (ſaith * Athanaſius) are unknown to "men according to their eſſence, *viz. God, angels*, and "the *ſouls* of men." Of the *nature* of the divine and high-born ſoul, we may ſay, as the learned † Whitaker doth of the way of its infection by *original ſin*, "it is eaſier ſought than "underſtood, and better underſtood than explicated:" And for its *original*, the moſt ſagacious and renowned for wiſdom amongſt the ‡ ancient *philoſophers* underſtood nothing of it. It is ſaid of ‖ Democritus, that "there is nothing in the "whole workmanſhip of nature of which he did not write;" and in a more lofty and ſwelling *hyperbole*, they ſtile their eagle-ey'd Ariſtotle, "the rule, yea, and miracle of nature; learning "itſelf, the very ſun of knowledge:" yet both theſe are not only ſaid, but proved by Lactantius to be learned ideots. How have the ſchools of Epicurus, and Ariſtotle, the Carteſians, and other ſects of *philoſophers*, abuſed and troubled the world with a kind of *philoſophical enthuſiaſm*, and a great many ridiculous

* *Tria ſunt quæ ſecundum eſſentiam hominibus ſunt ἀγνωστα, καὶ ἀπορητα, Deus, angelus, et anima hominis.* Ath. in Tract. de deſin.

† *Quæri facilius eſt quam intelligitur, et melius intelligitur quam explicatur.*

‡ Plato doubted, Ariſtotle denied, and Galen derided the doctrine of the world's creation.

‖ *Nihil eſt in toto opificio naturæ, de quo non ſcripſit Democritus.* And for Ariſtotle, they ſtiled him, *Regula naturæ, Naturæ miraculum, ipſa eruditio, ſol ſcientiarum, Antiſtes literarum et ſapientiæ.* Lactantius, lib. iii. cap. 17, 18.

fancies about the original of the soul of man! and when all is done, three words of God, by the pen of his inspired Moses *, enlightens us more than all their subtile notions of the accidental concretion of atoms, their *materia subtilis*, and *anima mundi*, and the rest of their unintelligible fancies could ever do.

The account Moses gives us in this context, of the origin of the world, and of man the epitome of it, is full of sense, reason, congruity, and clearness; and such as renders all the essays of all the Heathen philosophers to be vain, inevident, self-repugnant, and inexplicable theories.

The inspired penman gives us, in this context, a compendious narrative of the world's creation, relating more generally the rude, inform, and indigested chaos; and then more particularly the specificating, and diversifying of the various beautiful beings, thence educed by the motion of the Spirit of God upon the face of the waters.

When the first matter was strictly created out of nothing, "the Spirit (as Moses excellently expresseth it, chap. i. 2.) † "hovered, or moved over it as a bird over eggs, and, as it were, "by way of incubation, cherishing and influencing it," did thereby draw forth all the creatures into their several forms, and distinct particular natures, wherein we now, with delight and admiration, behold them.

In this manner and order was the stately fabric of the world produced, and erected; but, as yet, it remained as a fair, and well furnished house without an inhabitant. God had employed infinite wisdom and power about it, and engraven his name, upon the meanest creature in it; but there was no creature yet made (except angels, the inhabitants of another city) to read the name, and celebrate the name of the Almighty Creator.

He therefore thought the world imperfect till there was a creature made that could contemplate, praise, and worship the Maker of it: for this very use and purpose was man created, that he might not only see, but consider the things he saw; discourse, and rationally collect out of them the things he saw not; and both praise, and love the Maker for, and in them all.

* Philosophy seeks or searches after truth, but theology finds it. *Jo. Picus Miran.*

† רוחת אלהים מרחפת על פני המים רחף *Motus, commotus, agitatus fuit; non simplicem motum denotat, sed ejusmodi quam Columba peragit, cum ovis ad excludendum pullos incubat.* Rab. Sol.

The palaces of princes are not beautified and adorned, to the intent men should pay the respects and honours to the walls, but to shew the grandeur and magnificence of the king, to whose person their honour is due, as ‡ Athenagoras in his excellent apology for the Christians, speaks. The world is a glorious and magnificent pile, raised designedly to exhibit the wisdom and power of its Creator to the reasonable creature man, that from him God might receive the glory of all his other works. Of this creature man, the master-piece of all the visible world, (and therefore crowned king over it the first moment he was made, Psal. viii. 5.) Moses in the next place, gives us the account, both of his original, whence he came, and of his dignity, what he is. "The Lord God formed man out "of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the "breath of life; and man became a living soul." Where we find,

The original { I. Of the body / II. Of the soul } of man.

I. The original of the body of man: "Formed out of the dust "of the ground." "Dust was its original matter: of dust was "it made, and into dust it must be resolved, Gen. iii. 19. The "consideration is humbling, and serves to tame the pride of "man ‖", who is apt to dote upon his own beauty. Man's body was not made of heavenly matter, as the radiant sun, and sparkling stars: no, nor yet of the most precious and orient earthly matter; God did not melt down the pure and splendid gold and silver, or powder the precious pearls, and sparkling diamonds; but he formed it of the vile and despicable dust.

We find that the sprinkling of dust upon new writing prevents many a foul blot: I am sure, the sprinkling of our originary dust upon our minds by serious consideration, is the way to prevent many a proud boast.

However, the baseness of the matter, and coarseness of the stuff, serves to set off the admirable skill of the most wise and

‡ This world is indeed most beautiful, yet it is not the world itself that is to be adored, but that great Artificer its Creator: even as your subjects, when applying to you for what they need, do not act so foolish a part as to overlook you their lords and princes, omitting all the honour due to you, and confining their regards to the magnificence of your palaces; but, on the contrary, viewing the fine structure of your palaces only by the by, they revere and honour yourselves before and above all things else. *Athen. Apol.*

‖ עפר מן האדמה *Pulverem tenuissimam ad dorsandum superficiem.* Fagius.

powerful Architect, who out of such mean, despicable materials, has fashioned so exact and elegant a piece. "The Lord God "formed man out of the dust."

"*The Lord God.*] The name of God is here set down at full "‡, to set forth the dignity of man," the subject matter wrought upon, as some conceive.

Formed.] Fashioned, or curiously moulded, and figured it †. The *Hebrew verb*, primarily signifies "to press, compress, or "squeeze together; and by a *metalepsis*, by pressing and com-"pressing, to mould or fashion, as the potter doth his clay." The Psalmist useth another word to express the artificial elegancy of the body of man, Psal. cxxxix. 15, 16. רקמתי *acupictus sum*, I am embroidered, painted, or flourished, as with a needle. We render it, *curiously wrought*. Whatsoever beauty and comely proportion God hath bestowed by creation upon it, "it is "all answerable to that excellent *idea*, or model ‖ before "conceived in his mind and purpose." All this care, and cost was bestowed upon the body of man, which, when all is done, is but the case in which that estimable jewel, the soul, was to be lodged. This therefore I must lay aside and come to the more noble subject,

II. *The soul of man*: about which we have before us four things to ponder in this text, *viz.*

(1.) The nature, and property,
(2.) The descent, and original,
(3.) The manner of infusion,
(4.) The *nexus*, or bond that unites,

} the soul of man.

(1.) The nature and property of it, a *living soul*. The word נפש, as also the Chaldee *Naphsha*; and the Greek ψυχη, have one and the same *etymology*, all signifying to breathe, or respire; not that the breath is the soul, but denoting the manner of its infusion by the breath of God, and the means of its continuation in the body, by the breath of our nostrils. God's breath infused it, and our breath continues its union with the body. It signifies here the rational soul; and the *Hebrew* word נבש, *a soul*, hath a very near affinity with the word שמים, the heavens; and indeed there is a nearer affinity be-

‡ יהוה אלהים *Dominus Deus. Nomen Dei hic plenum est, propter hominis dignitatem.* Nachm.

‖ *Pressit* יצר *Compressit, et per Metalepsin, premendo et comprimendo formavit.*

† *Imaginem mente divina conceptam, quasi manu format.* Fagius.

wixt the things, *viz.* soul and heaven, than there is betwixt the names.

The epithet נפש which we translate *living*, the *Arabic* renders *a rational soul*; and indeed, none but a rational, deserves the name of a living soul; for all other forms or souls, which are of an earthly extract, do both depend on, and die with the matter out of which they were educed; but this being of another nature, a spiritual and substantial being, is therefore rightly stiled, *a living soul.*

The *Chaldee* renders it, *a speaking soul.* And indeed, it deserves a remark, that the ability of speech is conferred on no other soul but man's. Other creatures have apt and excellent organs; birds can modulate the air, and form it into sweet delicious notes, and charming sounds; but no creature, except man, whose soul is of an heavenly nature and extraction, can articulate the sound, and form it into words, by which the notions and sentiments of one soul are in a noble, apt, and expeditious manner conveyed to the understanding of another soul. And indeed, what should any other creature do with the faculty or power of speech, without a principle of reason to guide and govern it? It is sufficient to them, that they discern each others meaning by dumb signs, much after the manner that we traded at first with the Indians: but speech is proper only to the rational, or living soul; however, we render it a living, a rational, or a speaking soul, it distinguishes the soul of man from all other souls.

(2.) We find here the best account that was ever given of the origin of the soul of man, or whence it came, and from whom it derives its being. O, what a dust and pudder have the disputes and contests of philosophers raised about this matter! which is cleared in a few words in this scripture; * "God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became "a living soul: which plainly speaks it to be the immediate effect of God's creating power. Not a result from the matter; no, no, results flow *e sinu materiae*, out of the bosom of matter; but this comes *ex halitu divino*, from the inspiration of God. That wich is born of the flesh, is flesh; but this is a spirit descending from the Father of spirits, God formed it, but not out of any pre-existent matter, whether celestial or terrestrial;

* He breathed the breath of life into man, to shew that man's soul is from an external cause by creation, and that at the same time, in being created, it is infused into the body. *Pol. Synops. on the place.*

much less out of himself, as the † Stoicks speak; but out of nothing. An high-born creature it is, but no particle of the Deity. The indivisible and immutable essence of God is utterly repugnant to such notions; and therefore they speak not strictly and warily enough, that are bold to call it a ray or emanation from God.

A spirit it is, and flows by way of creation, immediately from the Father of spirits; but yet it is a spirit of another inferior rank and order.

(3.) We have also the account of the way and manner of its infusion into the body, *viz.* by the same breath of God which gave it its being. It is therefore a rational, scriptural, and justifiable expression of St. Augustine, *Creando infunditur, et infundendo creatur*; it is infused in creating, and created in infusing; though Dr. Brown ‡ too slightingly calls it a mere *rhetorical antimetathesis*. Some of the fathers, as Justin, Irenæus, and Tertullian, were of opinion, That the Son of God assumed a human shape at this time, in which afterwards he often appeared to the fathers, as a prelude to his true and real incarnation; and took dust or clay in his hands, out of which he formed the body of man, according to the pattern of that body in which he appeared: and that being done, he afterward, by breathing, infused the soul into it. But I rather think it is an *anthropopathy*, or usual figure in speech, by which the Spirit of God stoops to the imbecility of our understandings. "He breathed into his "nostrils the breath of life;" Hebrew, *lifes*. But this plural word חַיִּים notes rather the twofold life of man, in this world, and in that to come; or, "the several faculties and powers be- "longing to one and the same soul, *viz.* the intellective, sensitive, "and vegetative offices thereof; than that there are more souls "than one, essentially differing, in one and the same man; for "that, (as § Aquinas truly saith), is impossible." We cannot trace the way of the spirit, or tell in what manner it was united with this clod of earth. But it is enough, that he who formed it, did also unite or marry it to the body. This is clear, not

† The Stoicks, saith Simplicius, call the soul Μερος η μελος του Θεου, *i. e.* a particle or member of the Deity; and Seneca calls it, God dwelling in the human body, which comes near to Θεος ενσαρκος φαινομενος, *i. e.* God manifested in the flesh.

‡ *Religio Medici*, Sect. 36.

§ *Impossibile est in uno homine esse plures animas per essentiam differentes; sed una tantum est anima, quæ vegetativæ et sensitivæ et intellectivæ, officiis fungitur.* Aquin. 12. Q. 26. art. 2.

by way of natural resultancy from the body, but by way of inspiration from the Lord; not from the warm bosom of the matter, but from the breath of its Maker.

4. *Lastly*, We have here the *nexus*, *copula*, the tie or band by which it is united with the body of man, *viz. The breath of his* (*i. e.* of man) *nostrils*. It is a most astonishing mystery, to see heaven and earth married together in one person; the dust of the ground, and an immortal spirit clasping each other with such dear embraces, and tender love; such a noble and divine guest to take up its residence within the mean walls of flesh and blood. Alas, how little affinity, and yet what dear affection is found betwixt them!

Now, that which so sweetly links these two different natures together, and holds them in union, is nothing else but the breath of our nostrils, as the text speaks: it came in with the breath; whilst breath stays with us, it cannot go from us; and as soon as the breath departs, it departs also. All the rich elixirs and cordials in the world cannot persuade it to stay one minute after the breath is gone. One puff of breath will carry away the wisest, holiest, and most desirable soul that ever dwelt in flesh and blood. When our breath is corrupt, our days are extinct, Job xvii. 1. "Thou takest away their breath, they die, and re-"turn to their dust," Psal. cxiv. 19.

Out of the text thus opened, arise two doctrinal propositions, which I shall insist upon, *viz.*

Doct. 1. *That the soul of man is of divine original, created and inspired immediately by the Lord.*

Doct. 2. *That the souls and bodies of men are link'd, or knit together, by the feeble band of the breath of their nostrils.*

In the prosecution of these two propositions, many things will come to our hands, of great use in religion; which I shall labour to lay as clearly and orderly in the reader's understanding, and press as warmly upon his heart as I can. And first,

Doct. 1. *That the soul of man is of divine original, created and inspired immediately by the Lord.*

In this first proposition, two things are to be distinctly pondered, *viz.*

1. The nature
2. The original } of the soul.

Or, what it is, and from whence it came.

The nature of the soul.

I. The first thing which arrest our thoughts, and requires their attention and exercise, is the *nature of the soul*, or what kind of being it is;

Thoſe that are moſt curiouſly inquiſitive into all other beings, and put nature upon the rack to make her confeſs her ſecrets, are in the mean time found ſhamefully ſlight and negligent in the ſtudy of themſelves. Few there are that can prevail with themſelves to ſit down and think cloſe to ſuch queſtions as theſe. *What manner of being is this ſoul of mine? whence came it? why was it infuſed into this body? and where muſt it abide, when death hath diſlodged it out of this frail tabernacle?* There is a natural averſation in man to ſuch exerciſes of thought as theſe, although in the whole univerſe of beings in this lower world, a more noble creature is not to be found *.

The ſoul is the moſt wonderful and aſtoniſhing piece of divine workmanſhip; it is no *hyperbole* to call it the breath of God, the beauty of men, the wonder of angels, and the envy of devils. One ſoul is of more value than all the bodies in the world.

The nature of it is ſo ſpiritual and ſublime, that it cannot be perfectly known by the moſt acute and penetrating underſtanding, aſſiſted in the ſearch by all the aids philoſophy can contribute.

It is not my deſign in this diſcourſe to treat of the ſeveral faculties and powers of the ſoul, or to give you the riſe, natures, or numbers of its affections and paſſions: but I ſhall confine my diſcourſe to its general nature and original. And ſeeing "none can ſo well diſcover the nature of it, as he who is "the author of it," as Tertullian † ſpeaks, I therefore juſtly expect the beſt light from his words, though I will not neglect any other aid he is pleaſed elſewhere to afford.

‡ The ſoul is variouſly denominated from its ſeveral powers

* Therefore they who at any time have diſputed concerning the ſoul, muſt be reckoned to have diſputed not of a vain thing, that has nothing but a name, but about a very weighty ſubject, of the greateſt moment, than which nothing under heaven is more excellent. *Zanch. on the ſoul.*

† *Si quid de anima certandum eſt, ad Dei regulas dirigat: certè nullum alium potiorem animæ demonſtrationem, quam Auctorem.* Tertul. de anima, *&c.*

‡ As it quickens the body, it is called *anima, i. e.* the life; as it exerts acts of the will, it is called *animus, i. e.* power of volition; as it is the ſubject of knowledge, it is called the mind; when it recollects, it is called the memory; when it judges right, it is called reaſon; as it produces breathing, it is called ſpirit. *Iſidor. Etym.* v. 5.

and offices, as the sea from the several shores it washes. I will not spend time about the several names by which it is known to us in scripture, but give you that description of it, with which my understanding is most satisfied, which take thus:

The soul of man is a vital, spiritual, and immortal substance, endowed with an understanding, will, and various affections; created with an inclination to the body, and infused thereinto by the Lord.

The description of the soul.

In this description we have the two general parts into which I distributed this discourse: *viz.* its general nature, and divine original. The nature of the soul is expressed to us in these following terms.

I. *It is a substance.*

That is to say, not a *quality*, or an *accident* inhering in another being, or subject; as whiteness doth in the snow: but a being by * itself. Qualities and accidents have no existence of their own, but require another being, or subject to their existence; but the soul of man is a substantial being of itself, which will evidently appear upon the following grounds.

(1.) Because it is, in a strict and proper sense, created by God. "He formeth, or createth the spirit in man," Zech. xii. 1. To him we are advised to "commit it, as to a faithful "Creator," 1 Pet. iv. 19. The substantial nature of the soul is implied in the very notion of its creation; "for whatsoever "is created, is a *substance*, an *ens per se* †. Accidents are not "said to be created, but con-created;" the crasis of humours, and results of matter, are not substances created, but things rising in a natural way from created substances. They flow from, and, as to their essence, depend upon pre-existent matter; but the soul was created out of nothing, and infused into the body after it was formed and organized; which evidenceth its substantial nature.

(2.) This evidenceth the soul to be a substance; that it can, and doth exist, and subsist by itself alone, when separated from the body by death, Luke xxiii. 43. "To day shalt thou, (*i.e.* "thy soul) be with me in paradise;" and Mat. x. 20. "Fear "not them that kill the body but cannot kill the soul." Were

* The soul is a being by itself, *i. e.* it does not exist in any object, as a part or form of it, depending on it, as to its being. *Colleg. Conimb. in lib.* 11.

† *Quicquid a Deo proprie creatum est; accidentia enim non dicuntur creari, sed concreari.* Polani Synt. p. 319.

the soul but an accident, a quality, or a result, he that kills the body, must needs kill the soul too; as he that casts a snowball into the fire, must needs destroy the whiteness with the snow. Accidents fail and perish with their subjects: but seeing it is plain in these and many other scriptures, the soul doth not fail with the body; nothing can be more plain and evident, than that it is of a substantial nature.

When the Spaniards came first among the poor Indians, they thought the horse and his rider to be one creature; as many ignorant ones think the soul and body of man to be nothing but breath and body: whereas indeed they are two distinct creatures, as vastly different in their natures as the rider and his horse, or the bird and his cage. While the man is on horseback, he moves according to the motion of the horse; and whilst the bird is incaged, he eats and drinks, and sleeps, and hops and sings in his cage. But if the horse fail, and die under his rider, or the cage be broken, the man can go on his own feet, and the bird enjoy himself as well, yea, better in the open fields and woods, than in the cage: neither depend, as to being, or action, on the horse or cage.

(3.) Both scripture and philosophy consent in this, that the soul is the chief, most noble, and principal part of man, from which the whole man is, and ought to be denominated. So Gen xlvi. 26. "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt," *i. e.* all the persons; as the Latins say, *tot capita*, so many heads or persons. The apostle, in 2 Cor. v. 8. seems to exclude the body from the notion of personality, when he saith, *We are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord:* That *we*, a term of personality, is there given to the soul, exclusively of the body, for the body cannot be absent from itself: But *we*, that is, the souls of believers, may be both absent from it, and present with Christ.

To this we may add, 2 Cor. iv. 16. where the soul is called the *man*, and the *inner man* too, the body being but the external face, or shadow of the man. And to this *philosophers* agree. The best *philosophers* are so far from thinking that the body is the substantial part of man, and the soul a thing dependent on it, that chiefly they affirm, that the body depends upon the soul, and that it is the soul that conserves and sustains it;

conserves and sustains the animated body, but when it is, the nature of an animated body subsists no more; the soul not in the body, as in a place, seeing it cannot be circum

and that the body is in the soul, rather than the soul in the body, and that which is seen not the man, but that is the man which is invisible, that the body might be killed and the man not hurt; meaning the soul, which only deserves the name of man. Now if it be the chief part of man, and that which is only worthy the name of a man, and from which therefore the whole is, and ought to be denominated a man; if it be so far from depending on the body, or being contained within the body, that the body rather depends on it, and is in it, then surely the soul must be, what we describe it to be, a substantial *being*.

(4.) It is past all controversy, that the soul is a *substance*, because it is the subject of properties, affections and habits; which is the very strict and formal notion of a substance. All the affections and passions of hope, desire, love, delight, fear, sorrow, and the rest, are all rooted in it, and springing out of it; and for habits, arts and sciences *, it is the soul in which they are lodged and seated. Having once gotten a promptitude to act, either by some strong, or by some frequently repeated acting, they abide in the soul, even when the acts are intromitted, as in sleep a navigator, scribe or musician, are really artists, when they are neither sailing, and writing or playing; because the habits still remain in their minds, as is evident in this, that when they awake, they can perform their several works, without learning the rules of their art anew.

II. *The soul is a vital substance*, i. e.

A substance which hath an essential principle of life in itself: a living, active being. A *living* soul, saith Moses in the text; and hereby it is distinguished from, and opposed to matter or body. The soul moves itself and the body too; it hath a self-moving virtue or power in itself; whereas the matter, or body is wholly passive, and is moved and acted, not by itself, but by this vital spirit. Jam. ii. 26. "The body without the spirit is "dead." It acts not at all, but as it is acted by this invisible spirit. This is so plain that it admits of sensible proof and demonstration. Take mere matter, and compound or divide it, alter-

circumscribed by place. The whole soul pervades the whole body; nor is there any part of it, in which it is not present [illegible] not contained in the body, but rather itself contains the b[illegible] er is it in the body, as in a vessel or bottle, but rather th[illegible] in it. *Nyss. on the soul. b.* 2. *c.* 11. ουκ ἔστιν Ανθρωπος το ο[illegible] That which is seen, is not the Man, but every man's soul is [illegible] lf.

* The soul is the subject and seat of all the virtue[illegible] s, arts and sciences. *Buchan. loc. com. p.* 86.

it, and change it how you will, you can never make it see, feel, hear, or act vitally without a quickning and actuating soul: Yet we must still remember, that this active principle, the soul, though it hath this vital power in itself, it hath it not from itself, but in a constant receptive dependance upon God, the first cause, both of its being and power.

III. *It is a spiritual substance.*

All substances are not gross material, visible and palpable substances; but there are spiritual, and immaterial, as well as corporeal substances, discernible by sight or touch. To deny this were to turn a downright Sadducee, and to deny the existence of angels and spirits, Acts xxiii. 8. The word *substance*, as it is applied to the soul of man, puzzles, and confounds, the dark understandings of some, that know not what to make of an immaterial substance, whereas in this place it is no more than *substare accidentibus* *, *(i. e.)* to be a subject in which properties, affections, and habits are seated and subjected. This is a spiritual substance, and is frequently in scripture called a spirit; "Into thy hands I commit my spirit," Luke. xxiii. 46. "Lord Jesus receive my spirit," Acts vii. 59. and so frequently all over the scriptures. And the spirituality of its nature appears, (1.) By its descent, in a peculiar way, from the Father of spirits. (2.) In that it rejoiceth in the essential properties of a spirit. (3.) That at death it returns to that great Spirit who was its efficient and former.

(1.) It descends, in a peculiar way, from the father of spirits, as hath been shewn in the opening of this text: God stiles himself its Father, Heb. xii. 9. its former, Zech. xii. 1. 'Tis true, he giveth to all living things ζωὴν καὶ πνοὴν, life and breath, Acts xvii. 25. Other souls are from him, as well as the rational soul; but in a far different way and manner. They flow not immediately from him by creation, as this doth. It is said, Gen. i. 24, 27. "Let the earth bring forth the living creature "after its kind;" but "God created man in his own image:" Which seems plainly to make a specified difference betwixt the reasonable, and all other souls.

(2.) It rejoiceth in the essential properties of a spirit: For it is an incorporeal substance, as spirits are. It hath not *partes ...s*, extension of parts; nor is it divisible, as the body ... h no dimensions, and figures as matter hath; but is ... ice in this use of the word, is that which depends not, ... being, upon any fellow creature as accidents and ... ose being is by having their in-being in another fellow- ... their subject; but this being, *the soul*, exists in itself.

a most pure, invisible, and (as the acute and judicious Dr. More expresseth it) indiscernible substance. It hath the principle of life, and motion in itself, or rather, it is such a principle itself, and is not moved as the dull, and sluggish matter is, *per aliud*, by another. Its efficacy is great, though it be unseen, and not liable to the test of our touch, as no spiritual substances are. "A spirit (saith Christ) hath not flesh and bones," Luke xxiv. 39. We both grant and feel, that the soul hath a love, and inclination to the body, (which indeed is no more than it is necessary it should have) yet can we no more infer its corporiety from that love to the body, than we can infer the corporiety of angels from their affection, and benevolent love to men. It is a spirit of a nature vastly different from the body in which it is immersed. *There is* (saith a learned author *) *no greater mystery in nature, than the union betwixt soul and body: That a mind and spirit should be so tied and linked to a clod of clay, that while that remains in a due temper, it cannot by any art or power free itself!... What so much a kin are a mind and a piece of earth, a clod and a thought, that they shall be thus affixed to one another?*

Certainly, the heavenly pure bodies do not differ so much from a dunghil, as the soul and body differ: They differ but as more pure and less pure matter; but these, as material; and immaterial. If we consider wherein consists the being of a body, and wherein that of a soul; and then compare them, the matter will be clear.

We cannot come to an apprehension of their beings, but by considering their primary passions and properties, whereby they make discovery of themselves. The first, and primary affection of a body † (as is rightly observed) is that extension of parts whereof it is compounded, and a capacity of division, upon which, as upon the fundamental mode, the particular dimensions (that is, the figures) and the local motion do depend.

Again, for the being of our souls, if we reflect upon ourselves, we shall find that all our knowledge of them resolves into this, that we are beings conscious to ourselves of several kinds of cogitations; that by our outward senses we apprehend bodily things present; and by our imagination we apprehend things absent; and that we oft recover into our apprehension things past and gone, and, upon our perception of things, we selves variously affected.

Let these two properties of a soul and body be co upon the first view of a considering mind it will

* Mr. How's Fun. Serm. p. 9, 10.

† Philosophical Essay, p. 2. § 2. p. 39.

divisibility is not apprehension, or judgment, or desire, or discourse: That to cut a body into several parts, or put it into several shapes, or bring it to several motions, or mix it after several ways, will never bring it to apprehend, or desire. No man can think the combining of fires, and air, and water, and earth, should make the lump of it to know or comprehend, what is done to it, or by it. We see manifestly, that upon the division of the body, the soul remains entire and undivided. It is not the loss of a leg, or arm, or eye, that can maim the understanding, or the will, or cut off the affections.

Nay, it pervades the body it dwells in, and is whole in the whole, and in every part, which it could never do if it were material. Yea, it comprehends in its understanding, the body or matter in which it is lodged; and more than that, it can, and doth from conceptions of pure spiritual and immaterial beings, which have no dimensions or figures; all which shews it to be no corporeal, but a spiritual, and immaterial substance.

Understand it negatively, that the soul is not in the parts of the body per partes, *part in one part, and part in another, seeing it is indivisible, and hath no parts.*

(3.) As it derives its being from *the Father of spirits*, in a peculiar way, and rejoiceth in its spiritual properties: So at death it returns to *that great Spirit* from whence it came. It is not annihilated, or resolved into soft air, or sucked up again by the element of fire, or catched back again into the soul of the world, as some have dreamed; but it returns to God who gave it, to give an account of itself to him, and receive its judgment from him. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit "shall return to God who gave it," Eccl. xii. 7. Each part of man to its like, dust to dust, and spirit to spirit. Not that the soul is resolved into God, as the body is into earth; but as God created it a rational spirit, conscious to itself of moral good and evil, so when it hath finished its time in the body, it must appear before the God of the spirits of all flesh, its arbiter and final judge.

By all which we see, that as it is elevated too high on the one hand, when it is made a *particle of God himself*; not only the creature, but a part of God, ‡ as Plutarch, and ‖ Philo Judeas;

‡ *Anima autem mentis particeps facta, non solum Dei opus est, verum etiam pars; neque ab eo, sed de eo et ex facta.* Plut. de Qu. Platon.

‖ *Quomodo credibile videtur tam exiguam mentem humanam mem-*

and others have term'd it; (spirit it is, but of another and inferior kind:) So it is degraded too low, when it is affirmed to be matter, though the purest, finest, and most subtile in nature; which approacheth nearest to the nature of spirit. A spirit it is, as much as an angel is a spirit, though it be a spirit of another *species*. This is the name it is known by throughout the scriptures. In a word, it is void of mixture and composition; there are no jarring qualities, compound element, or divisible parts in the soul, as there are in bodies; but it is pure, simple, invisible, and indivisible substance, which proves its spirituality, and brings us to the fourth particular, *viz.*

IV. *It is an immortal substance.*

The simplicity, and spirituality of its nature, of which I spake before, plainly shews us, that it is in its very nature, designed for immortality; for such a being, or substance as this, hath none of the seeds of corruption, and death in its nature, as all material, and compounded beings have. It hath nothing within it tending to dissolution: No jarring elements, no contrary qualities are found in spirits, as there are in other creatures of a mixed nature. Physicians, and Philosophers have disputed, and contended eagerly about the true causes of natural death; "* and whilst they have been contending about the way, they "have come to the end." The ingress of the soul is obscure, and its egress not clear. But this seems to be the thing in which they generally centre, that the expence, and destruction of the † natural moisture, or radical balsam, as others call it, which is as the oil that maintains natural heat, or the bridle that restrains that flame of life from departing (as others express it;) this is the cause of natural death: Others ‡ assign the unequal re-

membranula cerebri, aut corde, haud amplis spaciis inclusam; totam cœli mundique magnitudinem capere, nisi illius divinæ fœlicisque animæ particula esset indivisibilis? Philo.

* *Litigamus de via, interim ad terminum rapimur.*

† Δει γαρ λαβειν οτι το ζωον εστι φυσει υργον και θερμον, και τοζην τοιουτον. Το δ' ληρας ψυχρον, και ξηρον και τό τεθνηκός φαινεται λαρ ουτως. *i. e.* For we must understand, that the animal hath a natural moisture and heat; which makes it to live. But old age drying up that moisture, and changing that heat into coldness, occasions death. All this is very plain. *Aristotle, on long and short life.*

‡ *Tum flammat et micat calidum nativum corporis nostri in humido primigenio, ejus humidi substantia consumitur, non aliter quam in lampade ileum a flamma exhauritur.* Heurnius. Aphor. 1. *Tam diu durat vigor vitæ, quam diu flat caladium nativum,*

paration of the parts of the body, as the cauſe of death. But be it one or another, 'tis evident the ſoul, which conſiſts neither of contrariant qualities, nor of diſſimilar parts, muſt be above the reach and ſtroke of death. For if the ſoul die, it muſt be either from ſome ſeeds, and principles of death, and corruption within itſelf, or by ſome deſtructive power without itſelf. In itſelf you ſee there is no ſeed, or principle of death; and if it be deſtroyed by a power without itſelf, it muſt be either by the ſtroke of ſome creature, or from the hand of God that firſt formed and created it: But the hand, and power of no creature can deſtroy it; the creatures power reaches no further than the body, Mat. x. 28. "They cannot kill the ſoul." And tho' the almighty power of God, that created it out of nothing, can as eaſily reduce it to nothing; yet he will never do ſo. For beſides the deſignation for eternity, which is diſcernible in its very nature (as before was obſerved) and which ſpeaks the intention of God to perpetuate his threatnings of eternal wrath, and promiſes of everlaſting life, reſpectively made to the ſouls of men, as they ſhall be found in Chriſt, or out of Chriſt, puts it beyond all doubt that they ſhall never die; as will be more fully evidenced in the following diſcourſe.

Well then, I hope ſo far our way is clear, in the ſearch of the nature of the ſoul, that it is a *ſubſtance*, a *ſpiritual* ſubſtance, and being ſo, it is alſo an *immortal ſubſtance*. No doubt remains with me as to either of theſe. Let us then proceed to the conſideration of its faculties, and powers, by which it may be yet more fully known, and we ſhall find that,

It is a vital, ſpiritual, and immortal ſubſtance, endued with an underſtanding.

This is the noble leading faculty of the ſoul: We are not diſtinguiſhed from *brutes* by our ſenſes, but by our *underſtanding*. As grace ſets one man above another, ſo underſtanding ſets the meaneſt man above the beſt of brutes. Strange and wonder-

tivum, donec ad mortem fuerit devenitum. Et quantum à calido et humido receditur, tantus ad mortem ſit acceſſus. J. Bapt. Montan. *Ortus noſtri primordio, caloris et humoris nativi habent ſummum complementum, &c.* Fernelius liber de ſpir. et cal. *Vergente ætate, inæqualis admodum ſit reparatio, aliæ partes reparantur ſatis feliciter, ſed aliæ ægre, et in pejus. Ut ab eo tempore corpora humana ſubiri incipiant tormentum illud* Mezentii, *ut viva in amplex mortuorum immoriantur,* Verulam. in additu Hiſt. vit. et mort.

ful things are performed by the natural instinct, and sagacity of beasts; but yet what is said of one, is true of them all, "God "hath not imparted understanding to them," Job xxxix. 17. This is a jewel which adorns none but rational creatures, men and angels.

What the understanding is.

It is a faculty of the reasonable soul, by which a man apprehends, and judgeth all intelligible things.

The *object* of it is *every being*, so far as it is true in itself, and apprehensible by man. It hath a two-fold use in the life of man, *viz.*

(1.) To distinguish truth from error and falshood. By this candle of the Lord, lighted up in the soul of man, he may discern betwixt duty and sin, good and evil: It is the eye of the soul, by which it seeth the way in which we should go, and the dangerous precipices that are on either side. It is the soul's *taster*, and discerns wholsom food from baneful poison, Job xii. 11. "Doth not the ear (*i. e.* the understanding by the *ear*) try "words, as the mouth tasteth meat?" It brings all things as it were, in the lump before it, and then sorts them, and orderly ranks them into their proper *classes* of *lawful* and *unlawful*, necessary and indifferent, *expedient*, and *inexpedient*, that the soul may not be damnified by mistaking one for another. And this judgment of discretion every man must be allowed for himself. No man is obliged to shut the eyes of his own understanding, and follow another man blindfold.

(2.) *To direct* and guide us in our practice. This faculty is by *philosophers* rightly called τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, *the leading faculty*: because the will follows its practical dictates. It sits at the helm, and guides the course of the soul; not impelling, or rigorously enforcing its dictates upon the will; for the will cannot be so imposed upon; but by giving it a directive light, or pointing, as it were, with its finger, what it ought to chuse, and what to refuse.

To this faculty belong two other excellent, and wonderful powers of the soul, *viz.*

1. Thoughts. | 2. Conscience.

1. The power or ability of cogitation: "* *Thoughts* are pro-
"perly the actings and agitations of the
What a thought is. "mind, or any actual operation of the un-
"derstanding." They are the musings of

* Διανοια, *cogitatio est mentis agitatio* Pascor. *vel actio mentis.* Zanch.

the mind, which are acted in the speculative part of the understanding. "It is observable that the † Hebrew word שׂוּחַ *suach*, "which is used for meditation, or thinking signifies both to "think and to speak in the mind." When the understanding, or mind resolves, and meditates the things that come into it, that very meditation is an inward speaking, or hidden word in the heart, Deut. xv. 9. "Beware lest there be a thought in thy "wicked heart," as some render it: In the Hebrew it is לְבָבְךָ דָּבָר עִם "a word in thy heart." So Mat. ix. 3, 4. εἶπον ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, "they spake within themselves," *i. e.* "they thought in "their hearts." The objects presented to the mind are the companions with whom our hearts talk and converse.

Thoughts are the figments and creatures of the mind: They are formed within it, in multitudes innumerable. The power of cogitation is in the mind, yea, in the spirit of the mind.

"‡ The fancy indeed, whilst the soul is embodied, ordina-"rily and for the most part presents the appearances and like-"nesses of things to the mind;" but yet it can form thoughts of things which the fancy can present no image of, as when ‖ the soul thinks of God, or of itself. This power of cogitation goes with the soul, and is rooted in it when it is separated from the body; and by it we speak to God, and converse with *angels*, and other spirits in the unbodied state, as will be more fully opened in the process of this discourse.

2. The *conscience* belongs also to this faculty; for it being the judgment of a man upon himself, with respect, or relation to the judgment of God, it must needs belong to the understanding part, or faculty. "*Thoughts* are formed in the *specu-*"*lative*, but * *conscience* belongs to the practical understand-"ing." It is a very high and awful power; it is *solo Deo minor*, and rides (as Joseph did) in the second chariot; the next and immediate officer under God. He saith of conscience, with

What conscience is.

† שׂוּחַ *cum puncto sinistro, locutus est ore, aut corde: et* διαλογίζομαι, *est fermocinari intra se*, (i. e.) *apud se in animis suis.* Mat. xxi. 25.

‡ *Phantasia menti effert phantasmata.* Picol.

‖ When we think of God, saith *Max. Tyr. Diss.* 1. we must think of nothing material, μητε μεγεθος, μητε χρωμα, μητε αλλο τι υλης παθος, *i. e.* Neither magnitude nor colour, nor any other property of matter.

* *Judicium appello conscientiam, ut ad intellectum eam pertinere ostendam.* Ames.

respect to every man, as he once said of Moses, with respect to Pharaoh, "See I have made thee a god to Pharaoh," Exod. vii. 1. The voice of conscience is the voice of God; for it is his vicegerent and representative. *What it binds on earth, is bound in heaven: and what it looseth on earth, is loosed in heaven.* It observes, records, and bears witness of all our actions; and acquits and condemns, as in the name of God, for them. Its consolations are most sweet, and its condemnations most terrible: so terrible, that some have chosen death, which is the king of terrors, rather than to endure the scorching heat of their own consciences. The greatest deference, and obedience is due to its command, and a man had better * endure any rack or torture in the world, than incur the torments of it. It accompanies us as our shadow, wherever we go; and when all others forsake us, (as at death they will) conscience is then with us, and is then never more active and vigorous than at that time. Nor doth it forsake us after death; but where the soul goes, it goes, and will be its companion in the other world for ever. How glad would the damned be if they might but have left their consciences behind them, when they went hence! But, as † Bernard rightly says, "It is both witness, judge, tormentor, and prison;" it accuseth, judgeth, punisheth, and condemneth.

And thus briefly of the understanding, which hath many offices, and as many names from those offices.

It is sometimes called *wit, reason, understanding, opinion, wisdom, judgment.* And why we bestow so many names upon one and the same faculty, the learned *author* of that small, but excellent ‡ tract *de anima*, gives this true and ingenious account.

The wit, *the pupil of the soul's clear eye,*
And in man's world the only shining star.
Looks in the mirror of the fantasy,
Where all the gatherings of the senses are;
And after by discoursing to and fro,
Anticipating and comparing things,

* What deaths would I not chuse? What punishment would I not undergo? Yea, into what vault of hell would I not rather chuse to be thrown, than to witness against my conscience?

† *Ipsa judicat, ipsa imperat, ipsa observat, ipsa torter, ipsa carcer.* Bern. lib. de Consc. cap. 9.

‡ *Nosce teipsum*, p. 48, 49.

She doth all universal natures know,
And all effects into their causes brings.

When she rates things, and moves from ground to ground,
The name of reason *she obtains by this:*
But when by reason she the truth hath found,
And standeth fixed, she understanding *is.*
When her assent she lightly doth incline
To either part, she is opinion *light:*
But when she doth by principles define
A certain truth, she hath true judgment's *sight.*

And as from senses, reason's work doth spring.
So many reasons understanding gain;
And many understandings knowledge bring,
And by much knowledge wisdom we obtain.

VI. God hath endued the soul of man not only with an *understanding* to discern, and direct, but also a *will* to govern, moderate, and overrule the actions of life. *6. Endued with a will.*

The will is a faculty of the rational soul, whereby a man either chuseth, or refuseth the things which the understanding discerns and knows. *What the will is.*

This is a very high, and noble power of the soul. The understanding seems to bear the same relation to the will, as a grave counsellor doth to a great *prince*. It glories in two excellencies, *viz.*

1. Liberty.
2. Dominion.

1. It hath a freedom and liberty; it cannot be compelled and forced: Coaction is repugnant to its very nature *. In this it differs from the understanding, that the understanding is wrought upon *necessarily*, but the will acts *spontaneously*. This liberty of the will respects the choice, or refusal of the means for attaining those ends it prosecutes, according as it finds them more or less conducible thereunto. The liberty of the will must be understood to be in things natural, which are within its own proper sphere, not in things *supernatural*. It can move, or not move the *body*, as it pleases, but it cannot move towards *Christ*, in the way of faith, as it pleaseth; it can open, or shut the hand,

* Ἐλευθερα ἐξουσια αυτο πραγμας. *i. e.* It hath a free liberty of action. *Zeno.*

or eye, at its pleasure, but not the heart. True indeed, it is not compelled, or forced to turn to God, by supernatural grace, but, in a way suitable to its nature, it is determined, and drawn to Christ, Psal. cx. 3. It is drawn by a mighty power, and yet runs freely; Cant. i. 4. "Draw me, and I will run after thee."

Efficacious grace, and victorious delight, is a thing very different from compulsive force. "Pelagius (as a late ‡ author "speaks) at first gave all to nature, acknowledged no necessity "of divine grace; but when this proud doctrine found little "countenance, he called nature by the name of grace; and "when that deceit was discovered, he acknowledged no other "grace but outward instruction, or the benefit of external re- "velation, to discourse, and put men in mind of their duty. "Being yet driven farther, he acknowledged the grace of par- "don; and before a man could do any thing acceptably, there "was a necessity of the remission of sin, and then he might "obey God perfectly. But that not sufficing, he acknowledged "another grace, *viz.* the example of Christ, which doth both "secure our rule and encourage our practice. And last of all, "his followers owned some kind of internal grace, but they "made that to consist in some illumination of the understand- "ing, or moral persuasion, by probable arguments, to excite "the will, and this not absolutely necessary, but only for fa- "ciliation, as an horse to a journey, which otherwise a man "might go a foot. Others grant the secret influences of God's "grace, but make the will of man a co-ordinate cause with "God, namely, that God doth propound the object, hold forth "inducing considerations; give some remote power and assist- "ance; but still there is an indifferency in the will of man, to "accept or refuse, as liketh him best." Thus have they been forced to quit and change their ground; but still the pride of nature will not let men see the necessity of divine, efficacious influences upon the will, and the consistency thereof with natural liberty.

(2.) Its dignity in its *dominion*, as well as in its liberty. The will hath an *empire*, and sceptre belonging to it; yea, a double empire, for it rules.

Imperium { 1. Despoticum. } 1. Over the body, *imperio despotico*, by way of absolute command.
{ 2. Politicum. } 2. Over the other powers and passions of the soul, *imperio politico*, by way of *suasion*,

‡ Dr. Manton in Psal. cxix. v. 36.

(1.) The will, like an absolute sovereign *, reigns over the body (*i. e.*) its external members by way of absolute command. It saith, as the *centurion* did, I am in authority, and God hath put the many members of the body in subjection to me; I say to one, move, and it moves; to another, stop, and it stops; and to a third do this, and it doth it. The obsequious members of the body, like so many servants, have their eyes waiting on the imperial commands of the will, and it is admirable to behold with what dispatch, and speed they execute its commands, as if their obedient motions were rather concomitant, than subsequent acts to the will's mandates. Let it but command to have the windows of the body open or shut, and it is done in a moment, in the twink of an eye; and so for the rest of the external senses and members, they pay it most ready obedience. Yet when I say, the will hath a *despotical*, and absolute sovereignty over the members, it must be understood with a double limitation. *First*, They are only at its beck for use and service; it can use them whilst well and rightly disposed; but it cannot perpetuate them, or restore them when indisposed. If the soul will the health, and life of the body never so intensely and vehemently, it cannot keep off death one moment the longer from it. And, *Secondly*, Its sovereignty no way intrenches upon, nor interferes with the dominion of providence over the members of the body, and the various motions of them. God hath reserved a sovereign, *negative voice* to himself, whatever decrees the will passes. Jeroboam stretches out his hand against the man of God to smite him; but God puts a *remora* in the very instant to the loco-motive faculty, that though he would never so fain, he could not pull in his hand again to him, 1 Kings xiii. 4. The will commands the service of the tongue, and chargeth it to deliver faithfully such or such words, in which, it may be, the ruin of good men may be imported; and when it comes to do its office, the tongue falters; and contrary to the command of the will, drops some word that discovers and defeats the design of the will, according to that in Job xii. 20. "He removeth away the speech of the trusty." This is its despotical and sovereign power over the external members of the body.

* Man acts not by necessity of nature, but freely, namely in a rational way, that is by way of command; this command requires the final determination of the practical understanding, and while the efficacy of the command stands, the will is moved freely. *Camel. de Volun.* p. 50.

(2.) It hath a *political* power over the faculties and passions of the soul, not by way of absolute command, but by way of *suasion* and *insinuation*. Thus it can oft times persuade the understanding, and thoughts to lay by this or that subject, and apply themselves to the study of another. It can bridle, and restrain the affections and passions, but yet it hath no absolute command over the inner, as it hath over the outward man. Its weakness and inability to govern the inner man appears in two things, more especially remarkable, *viz.* 1. It cannot with all its power and skill command, and fetch off the thoughts from some subjects, which are set on, at some times, with extraordinary weight upon the soul. However, the thoughts may obsequiously follow its beck at some times, yea, for the most part; yet they are cases, and seasons, in which its authority, and persuasions cannot disengage one thought.

As (1.) When God hath to do with the soul, in the work of conversion, when he convinceth of sin and danger, and sets a man's evils in order before his eyes: These are terrible representations, and fain would the carnal will disengage the thoughts from such sad subjects, and strives by all manner of persuasions, and diversions, so to do; but all to no purpose, Psal. li. 3. "My sin is ever before me." The thoughts are fixed, and there is no removing of them. It may give them a little interruption, but they return with the more impetuous violence. And instead of gaining them off, they at last, or rather God by them gains over the will also.

(2.) When Satan hath to do with the soul, in the way of *temptation*, and hellish *suggestion*: Look, as the carnal will opposed itself to the thoughts in the former case to no purpose; so that the sanctified will opposes itself to them in this case, oftimes with as little effect or success, as he that opposeth his weak breath to the strong current of a mighty river. Well were it, if the sanctified will were now the master of the fantasy, and could controul the thoughts of the heart; but, like a made horse, the *fancy* takes the bit in its teeth, and runs whither it pleaseth; the will cannot govern it. Think quite another way, saith the *will*; turn thy thoughts to other things; but notwithstanding, the soul turneth a deaf ear to its counsels. 2. It cannot quiet and compose a raging conscience, and reduce it at its pleasure to rest and peace. This is the peculiar work of God. He only that stills the stormy seas, can quiet the distressed and tempestuous soul. The impotence of the will, in this case, is known to all that have been in those deeps of trouble. And this is the misery of the *devil* and the *damned*,

that though they would never so fain, yet they cannot get rid of those tormenting impressions made upon them by their own trembling and condemning consciences. There would not be so many pale, sweating, affrighted consciences on earth, and in hell, if the will had any command or power over them.

Tam frigida mens est
Criminibus; tacita sudant præcordia culpa.

It is an horrible sight to see such a trembling upon all the members, such a cold sweat upon the panting bosom of a self-condemned, and wrath-presaging soul, in which it can, by no means relieve or help itself. These things are exempt from the liberty, and dominion of the will of man; but notwithstanding these exemptions, it is a noble faculty, and hath a vastly extended empire in the soul of man; it is the door of the soul, at which the Spirit of God knocks for entrance. When this is won, the soul is won to Christ; and if this stand out in rebellion against him, he is barred out of the soul, and can have no saving union with it. The truth of grace is to be judged and discerned by its compliance with his call, and the measure of grace to be estimated by the degree of its subjection to his will.

VII. The soul of man is not only indued with an *understanding* and *will*, but also with *various affections* and *passions*, which are of great use and service to it, and speak the excellency of its nature. They are originally designed, and appointed for the happiness of man, in the promoting and securing its chiefest good, to which purpose they have a natural aptitude: for the true happiness and rest of the soul not being in itself, nor in any other creature, but in God, the soul must necessarily move out of itself, and beyond all other created beings, to find and enjoy its true felicity in him. The soul considered at a distance from God, its true rest and happiness, is furnished and provided with *desire* and *hope* to carry it on, and quicken its motion towards him. These are the arms it is to stretch out towards him, in a state of absence from him. And seeing it is to meet with many obstacles, enemies, and difficulties, in its course, which hinder its motion, and hazard its fruition of him, God hath planted in it, fear, grief, indignation, jealousy, anger, *&c.* to grapple with, and break through those intercurrent difficulties and hazards †.

7. *Furnished with various affections and passions.*

† *Passio animæ nihil aliud est quam motus appetivæ virtutis pro-*

By these weapons in the hands of grace, it conflicts with that which opposes its passages to God, as the apostle expresseth that holy fret and passion of the Corinthians, and what a fume their souls were in by the gracious motion of the irrascible appetite; 2 Cor. vii. 11. "For behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort; what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge?" Much like the raging and struggling of waters, which are interrupted in their course by some dam or obstacle which they strive to bear down, and sweep away before them.

But the soul considered in full union with and fruition of God, its supreme happiness, is accordingly furnished with affections of love, delight, and joy; whereby it rests in him, and enjoys its proper blessedness in his presence for ever. Yea, even in this life, these affections are in an imperfect degree exercised upon God, according to the prelibations and enjoyments it hath of him by faith, in its way to heaven. In a word,

The true uses, and most excellent ends for which these affections and passions are bestowed upon the soul of man, are to qualify it, and make it a fit subject to be wrought upon in a moral way of persuasions and allurements, in order to its union with Christ, (for by the affections, as Mr. Fenner rightly observes, the soul becomes marriageable, or capable of being espoused to him;) and being so, then to assist it in the prosecution of its full enjoyment in heaven, as we heard but now.

But, alas, how are they corrupted and inverted by sin! The concupiscible appetite greedily fastens upon the creature, not upon God; and the irrascible appetite is turned against holiness, not sin. But I must insist no farther on this subject here, it deserves an entire treatise by itself.

8. *And an inclination and love to the body.*

VIII. The soul of man hath, in the very frame and nature of it, an inclination to the body. There is in it a certain *pondus* or inclination which naturally bends or sways it towards matter, or a body. There are three different natures found in living creatures, *viz.*

1. The brutal.
2. The angelical.

prosecutione boni; vel fuga mali. i. e. A passion of the soul is nothing else, but the motion of desire in seeking good, and shunning evil.

3. The human.

(1.) The soul of a *brute* is wholly confined to, and dependent on the matter or body with which it is united. It is dependent on it, both *in esse et in operari*, in its being and working; it is but a material form, which arises from, and perisheth with the body. "The soul of a brute, (saith a great person *) is no "other than a fluid bodily substance, the more lively, and refin-"ed part of the blood (called spirit) quick in motion, and from "the arteries by the branches of the *carotides* carried to the "brain; and from thence conveyed to the nerves and muscles, "move the whole frame and mass of the body; and receiving "only certain weak impressions from the senses, and of short "continuance, hindered and obstructed of its work and moti-"on, vanishes into the soft air."

(2.) An angel is a spirit free from a body, and created without an appetite or inclination to be embodied. The Stoics call the angels νους ψυχικους, souly substances; and the *Peripatetics, formas abstractas*, abstract forms. They are spirits free from the fetters and clogs of the body.

"† An angel is a perfect soul, and an human soul is an im-"perfect angel." Yet angels have no such rooted disaffection to, and abhorrence of a body, but they have assumed, and can, in a ready obedience to their Lord's commands, and delight to serve him, assume bodies, for a time, to converse with men in them, *i. e.* aerial bodies in the figure and shape of human bodies. So we read, Gen. xviii. 2. *three men i. e.* angels in human shape and appearance, stood by Abraham, and talked with him; and at Christ's sepulchre, Luke xxiv. "There appeared two men in "shining garments." But they abide in these bodies, as we do in an inn, for a night, or short season; they dwell not in them as our souls in those houses of flesh, which we cannot put on and off at pleasure as they do; but as we walk in our garments, which we can put off without pain.

(3.) The human soul is neither wholly tied to the body, as the brutal soul is; nor created without inclination to a body, as angels are; but loves and inclines to it, though it can both live and act without it, when it is parted from it at death. The proof of this assertion, and the reasons why God created it with such an inclination, will, in their proper place, be more fully spo-

* Lord Chief Justice Hale, in his treatise *de anima*, p. 56.

† *Angelus est anima perfecta, et anima est angelus imperfectus*, Bell. de ascen. mentis.

ken to, in the following discourse. All that I shall add is, That in this, as well as in some other respects, our souls are made *a little lower than the angels*; but when they are uncloathed of the body, and have received it again, in a new edition, a spiritual body, then they shall be ἰσαγγελοι, equal unto angels, in the way and manner of life and action.

Thus I have, as briefly as I can, dispatched the first thing propounded, *viz.* the nature of the soul, in the explication of these seven particulars: it is a substance, a vital, spiritual, and immortal substance, a substance endued with understanding, will, affections, and an inclination to the body. And now we are come to the

II. Branch, viz. *Its original and infusion.*

I. As to its original, I have described it to be immediately from God, in the way of creation: an honour done to no other living creature except angels. The world hath been troubled with a great many extravagant, and wild notions about the original of the soul of man; a (certain mark and argument of its apostacy from God.) "‡ Solinus writes of one, who by "a wound in the hinder part of his head, fell into such a degree of ignorance and oblivion, that he forgot his own name, "and could not tell whether he had any name at all." But oh! what a stunning blow did man receive by the fall, that he should forget the very Author of his being, and rather claim alliance, and derive the being of his soul from any thing than God; though it bears the very marks and characters of its divine Author and Father upon it! The principal errors about the origin of the soul (for that wild notion of Epicurus hath been laid so flat by the pens of many learned men, that it is a vanity to strike one blow more at it) may be reduced to these three heads.

(1.) Some affirm it to be by way of ‖ *traduction*, or natural generation from the parents to the child. This opinion is very ancient; Tertullian, and divers of the Western Fathers, closed with it, as judging it the best expedient to solve the difficulties of the soul's taint and defilement with original sin.

‡ *Solinus refert de quodam, quod accepto vulnere in occipitio, ad tantam devenit ignorantiam, ut nesciret se habuisse nomen.* Augustodun. de Philosoph. Mundi, lib. iv. c. 24.

‖ *Datur agens physicum quod aliud esse non potest quam parens; qui ei seminis animam e materiæ sinu eliciat. i. e.* There is a physical agent which can be no other than the parent, who produces the soul of seed from the bosom of matter.

But antiquity is no passport for errors. The grey hairs of opinion, as one well notes, are then honourable, when they are found in the way of truth. Doctor Brown * tells us, "He "should rather incline to the creation, than the traduction of "the soul, though either opinion, (saith he,) will consist "well enough with religion, did not one objection haunt "him, and this is a conclusion from the equivocal and "monstrous productions by unnatural copulation, as of a man "and beast: for, if the soul of man, (saith he,) be not trans-"mitted and transfused in the seed, why are not these produc-"tions merely beasts, but have also an impression and tincture "of reason in as high a measure, as it can evidence itself in those "improper organs?"

Which way the doctor's judgment had inclined in this controversy, had been of no great consideration to the determination of it; though it is a pity we should lose his consent and company, for the sake of such a beastly objection as this, which haunts his mind: for, if there be any such creatures that seem to have a tincture of reason, it is but a tincture, and a seeming, not a real tincture neither, which many other brutes have.

The doctor is too well acquainted with philosophy, and a man of too much reason to allow himself to think that such a production, as he speaks of, hath two natures and essential forms in one body, as of a man and a horse. He knows that every entity hath but one special essence, and can have no more, except he will place one and the same thing under diverse species in the predicament of substance. And as there cannot be two distinct forms, so neither can there be a mixion of them in the *Centaur* or monstrous birth: for, *ex duobus entibus per se, non fit unum ens per se.* But he confesseth this *objection* was bred among the weeds and tares of his own brain, (a rank soil no doubt) and I am pretty confident he had weeded it out in his latter years; for I find this notion of the *Centaurs*, (that is, half horses, half man), but into its proper place among his vulgar errors, B. 1. chap. 4. And so I suppose that rub being out of the way, he returned again to us.

(2.) A second opinion was, That they were procreated by angels: and that which gave the ground, such as it is, to this opinion or fancy, is the similitude or resemblance which is found betwixt angels and the souls of men. But this fancy needs not any industry to overthrow it; for though it be certain there is a

* *Religio Medici*, Sect. 36.

similitude and resemblance † betwixt angels and souls, both being immaterial and spiritual substances, yet angels neither propagate by generation, nor is it in their power to create the least fly or worm in the world, much less the soul of man, the highest, and noblest, and most excellent being. Great power they have, but no creating power, that is God's incommunicable property; and procreate our souls they did not, for though they are spirits, yet spirits of another species.

The coetaneous creation of souls rejected.

(3.) A third sort there are, who deny that souls are created substances, and proceeded from God; but affirm withal, that he created them *simul, et semel*, together and at once, as the angels were, and not one by one, as men are born into the world. "Of this opinion was Plato; who thought "all human souls to be created together before their bodies, "and placed in some glorious and suitable mansions, as the stars; "till, at last, growing weary of heavenly, and falling in love "with earthly things, for a punishment of that crime, they "were cast into bodies, as into so many prisons ‡." Origen sucked in this notion of the pre-existence of souls: and upon this supposition it was that Porphyry tells us, in the life of Plotinus, he blushed as often as he thought of his being in a body, as a man that lived in reputation and honour, blushes when he is lodged in a prison. The ground on which the Stoics bottomed their opinion was, the great dignity and excellency of the soul, which inclined them to think they had never been degraded and abased, as they are by dwelling in such vile bodies, but for their faults; and that it was for some former sins of theirs, that they slid down into gross matter, and were caught into a vital union with it; whereas, had they not sinned, they had lived in celestial and splendid habitations, more suitable to their dignity.

But this is a pure creature of fancy; for, (1.) No soul in the world is conscious to itself, of such a pre-existence, nor can

† That is perfect, which produces some other thing like itself; but substances that are immaterial, are far more perfect than those which are material; therefore, if these last make others like in kind to themselves, much more must angels be able to procreate, some other incorporeal substance of an inferior nature, namely, the human soul. *D. Dionys. c. 4. de divinis nominibus.*

‡ *Plato in Timæo finxit Deum omnes animas humanas ante corpora simul creasse, et incomparibus stellis constituisse: tum eas cœlestium rerum tædio, et terrenarum amore captas, ut tanti sceleris pœnas luerent, in corpora tanquam in carcerem conjectas.*

remember when it was owner of any other habitation than that it now dwells in. (2.) Nor doth the scripture give us the least hint of any such thing. Some indeed would catch hold of that expression, Gen. ii. 2. "God rested the seventh day from all the "works which he had made:" and it is true, he did so, the work of creation was finished and sealed up, as to any new species or kind of creatures to be created; no other sort of souls will be created, than that which was at first: but yet God still creates individual souls, *(My Father worketh hitherto, and I work)*, of the same kind and nature with Adam's soul. And, (3.) For their detrusion into these bodies as a punishment of their sins in the former state; if we speak of sin in *individuals*, or particular persons, the scripture mentions none, either original or actual, defiling any soul in any other way but by its union with the body. Pre-existence therefore is but a dream.

But to me it is clear, that the soul receives not its beginning by traduction or generation; for that which is generable, is also corruptible; but the spiritual immortal soul, (as it hath been proved to be), is not subject to corruption. Nor is it imaginable how a soul should be produced out of matter, which is not endued with reason: or, how a bodily substance can impart that to another, which it hath not in itself. If it be said, the soul of the child proceeds from the soul of the parents, that cannot be; for spiritual substances are impartible, and nothing can be discinded from them. "* And it is absurd to think the soul of "Adam should spring from one original, and the souls of his "offspring from another, whilst both his and theirs are of one "and the same nature and species." To all which let me add, That as this assertion of their creation is most reasonable, so it is most scriptural. It is reasonable to think and say, "† That "no active power can act beyond, or above the proper sphere "of its activity and ability." But if the soul be elicited out of the power of matter, here would be an effect produced abundantly more noble and excellent than its cause. And as it is most reasonable, so it is most scriptural. To this purpose diverse testimonies of scripture are cited and produced by our divines, amongst which we may single out these four, which are of special remark and use; Heb. xii. 9, "Furthermore, we had

* *Absurdum est aliunde esse animam nostram, aliunde animam Adæ: cum omnes sunt ejusdem speciei.* Zanch.

† *Nulla virtus activa agit ultra suum genus, sed anima intellectiva excedit totum genus, corporeæ naturæ, cum sit substantia spiritualis, &c.* Conimbr.

" fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them
" reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to [the
" Father of spirits,] and live?" Here God is called the Father of spirits, or of souls, and that in an emphatical *antithesis*, or contradistinction to our natural fathers, who are called the *fathers of our flesh*, or bodies only. The true scope and sense of this text, is, with great judgment and clearness, given us by that learned and judicious divine, Mr. Pemble ‡, in these words: " [Nothing is more plain and emphatical than this antithesis; " We receive our flesh and body from our parents, but our " souls from God: if then we patiently bear the chastisements " of our parents, who are the authors of the vilest part, and " have the least right or power over us; with how much more " equal a mind should we bear his chastisements, who hath the " supreme right to us, as he is the Father and only giver of that " which is most excellent in us, *viz.* our souls or spirits?]" Here it appears evident, that our souls flow not to us in the material channel of fleshly generation or descent, as our bodies do, but immediatly from God, their proper Father, in the way of creation. Yet he begets them not out of his own essence or substance, as Christ, his natural Son, is begotten, but, ἐκ μὴ ὄντων, out of nothing that had been before, as Theodoret well expresseth it. Agreeable hereunto is that place also in Zech. xii. 1. " The Lord which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth " the foundations of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man " within him:" " ‖ Where the forming of the spirit, or soul " of man, is associated with these two other glorious effects of " God's creating power, namely, the expansion of the heavens, " and laying the foundations of the earth;" all three are here equally assumed by the Lord, as his remarkable and glorious works of creation. He that created the one, did as much create the other.

Now the two former we find frequently instanced in scripture, as the effects of his creating power, or works implying the

‡ Pemble de origine animae, *p.* 56. *Nihil apertius et ἐμφατικώτερον ista Antithesi, cranem corpusque a parentibus, animas a Deo accipimus; quod si vilioris partis authores, et qui in nos minus juris habent, patienter castigantes ferimus; quanto æquiore animo feremus eum qui supremum in nos jus obtinet, utpote partis, quæ in nobis est præstantissima, unicus Dator Conditorque.*

‖ *Testimonium satis clarum, quo docemur, pari passu hæc tria ambulare; expansionem cœli, fundationem terræ, et formationem animæ rationalis.*

Almighty Power of God; and therefore are preſented as ſtrong props to our faith, when it is weak and ſtaggering, for want of viſible matter of encouragement, Iſa. xl. 22. and xlii. 5. Jer. x. 12. Job ix. 8. Pſal. civ. 2. *q. d.* Are my people in captivity, and their faith nonplus'd, and at a loſs, becauſe there is nothing in ſight that hath a tendency to their deliverance, no prepared matter for their ſalvation? Why let them conſider who it was that created the heavens, and the earth, yea, and their ſouls alſo, which are ſo perplex'd with doubts, out of nothing; the ſame God that did this, can alſo create deliverance for his people, though there be no pre-exiſtent matter to work it out of.

Add to this that excellent place of * Solomon, in Eccl. xii. 7. "Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth, as it was: and the "ſpirit to God who gave it." Where he ſhews us what becomes of man, and how each part, of which he conſiſts, is beſtowed, and diſpoſed of after his diſſolution by death. And thus he ſtates it: The two conſtitutive parts of a man are a ſoul and a body: theſe two parts have two diſtinct originals: the body, as to its material cauſe, is duſt; the ſoul, in its nature, is a ſpirit, and as to its origin, it proceedeth from the Father of ſpirits; it is his own creature, in an immediate way. *He gave it:* he gave it the being it hath by creation, and gave it to us, *i. e.* to our bodies by inſpiration. Now *qualis Geneſis, talis Analyſis:* When death diſſolves the union which is betwixt them, each part returns to that from whence it came, duſt to duſt, and the ſpirit to God that gave it. The body is expreſſed by its material cauſe, duſt; the ſoul only by its efficient cauſe; as the gift of God; becauſe it had no material cauſe at all, nor was made out of any pre-exiſtent matter, as the body was. And therefore Solomon here ſpeaks of God, as if he had only to do with the ſoul, leaving the body to its material and inſtrumental cauſes; with whom he concurs by a general influence. It is God, not man alone, or God by man, that hath given us theſe bodies; but it is not man, but God alone, who hath given us theſe ſouls. He therefore paſſeth by the body, and

* Solomon reſolves both the parts of man into their firſt principles; as therefore he reſolves the body into the duſt, whence it was taken; ſo alſo, if the ſoul had been made of an heavenly ſubſtance, or, (as Plato ſays), of the ſoul of the world, Solomon would have reſolved the ſoul into it; but when he ſays ſimply of the ſoul, that it returns to God who gave it, he teaches us, That it was created of nothing, into which it could not be reſolved. *Zanch.*

speaks of the soul as the gift of God; because that part of man, and that only, flows immediately from God, and, at death, returns to him that gave it. All these expressions, *The Father of spirits*, the *former of the spirit of man*, the *giver of the spirit*; how agreeably are they to each other, and all of them to the point under hand, that the soul flows from God by immediate creation? You see it hath no principle out of which, according to the order of nature, it did arise, as the body had; and therefore it hath no principle into which, according to *the* order of nature, it can be returned, as the body hath; but returns to God, its efficient cause: if reconciled, to a Father, not only by creation, but adoption; if unreconciled, as a creature guilty of unnatural rebellion against the God that formed it, to be judged.

II. God created and infused it into the body, with an inherent inclination and affection to it. The † nature of the soul and body is vastly different, there is no affinity or similitude betwixt them: but it is in this case, as in that of marriage. Two persons of vastly different educations, constitutions, and inclinations, coming under God's ordinance, into the nearest relation to each other, find their affections knit and endeared by their relation to a degree beyond that which results from the union of blood: So it is here. Whence this affection arises, in what acts it is discovered, and for what reason implanted, will be at large discovered in a distinct branch of the following discourse, to which it is assigned. Mean while, I find myself concerned to vindicate what hath been here asserted from the arguments which are urged against the immediate creation and infusion of the soul, and in the defence of the opinion of its traduction from the parents. To conceal, or dissemble these arguments and objections, would be but a betraying of the truth I have here asserted, and give occasion for some jealousy, that they are unanswerable. To come then to an issue; and first,

Object. 1. It is urged, that it is manifest in itself, and generally yielded, that the souls of all other creatures come by generation, and therefore it is probable that human souls flow in the same channel also.

† The body is necessary to the soul, which is the perfection of the organical body, for it is not a separate form, *i. e.* a form properly so called, therefore it requires matter, in so much that the soul, when separate from the body, still retains its relation and inclination to it, which is followed with the resurrection of the body. *Camer. rou prælect. in Mat. p.* 124.

Solut. There is a ſpecific difference betwixt rational ſouls, and the ſouls of all other creatures, and therefore no force at all in the conſequence. A material form may riſe out of matter; but a ſpiritual, rational being (as the ſoul of man is) cannot ſo riſe, being much more noble and excellent than matter is.

What animal is there in the world, out of whoſe ſoul the acts of reaſon ſpring, and flow, as they do out of human ſouls? Are they capable of inventing, (or which is much leſs) of learning the arts and ſciences? Can they correct their ſenſes, and demonſtrate a ſtar to be far greater than the whole earth, which to the eye ſeems no bigger than the rowel of a ſpur? Do they foreknow the poſitions, and combinations of the planets, and the eclipſes of the ſun and moon many years before they ſuffer them? And if they cannot perform theſe acts of reaſon, as it is ſure they cannot, how much leſs can they know, fear, love, or delight in God, and long for the enjoyment of him! Theſe things do plainly evince human ſouls to be of another *ſpecies*, and therefore of a higher original than the ſouls of brutes. If all have one common nature and original, why are they not all capable of performing the ſame rational, and religious acts?

Obj. 2. But though it ſhould be granted, that the ſoul of the firſt man was by immediate creation and inſpiration from God; yet it follows not, that the ſouls of all his poſterity muſt be ſo too. God might create him with a power of begetting other ſouls after his own image. The firſt tree was created with its ſeed in itſelf to propagate its kind, and ſo might the firſt man.

Sol. 1. Trees, animals, and ſuch-like, were not created immediately out of nothing, as the ſoul of man was; but the earth was the pre-exiſtent matter out of which they were produced by the word of God's bleſſing and power; but man's ſoul was immediately breathed into him by God, and had no pre-exiſtent matter at all: And beſides, all human ſouls being of one *ſpecies*, have therefore one and the ſame original: The ſoul of the pooreſt child is of equal dignity with the ſoul of Adam. And if we conſult Job xxxiii. 4. we ſhall find Elihu giving us there the ſame account, and almoſt in the ſame words, of the original of his ſoul that Moſes in my text gives us of the original of Adam's ſoul: "The Spirit of God hath formed me, and the "breath of the Almighty hath given me life."

Sol. 2. But it is evident, ſouls ſpring not from the parent, as one plant, or animal doth from another; for they have their ſeed in themſelves, apt and proper to produce their kind; but the ſeed of ſouls is not to be found in man: It is not to be found

in his body; for then (as was said before) a spiritual and nobler essence must be produced out of a material and baser matter, *(i. e.)* the matter must give to the soul that which it hath not in itself, nor is it to be found in its soul; for the soul being a pure, simple, and invisible being, can suffer nothing to be descinded from it, towards the production of another soul. A spirit, as the soul is, *substantia simplex et impartibilis;* an uncompounded, and indiscerpible, or impartible being. Nor can it spring partly from the body, and partly from the soul, as from con-causes; for then it should be partly corporeal, and partly incorporeal, as its causes are. "So that there is no matter, "seed, or principle of souls found in man; and to be sure (as * "Baronius strongly argues) he cannot produce a soul without "pre-existent matter; for that were to make him omnipotent, "and assign a creating power to a creature." Besides, that which is generable, is also corruptible, as we see trees, animals, *&c.* which are produced that way, to be; but the soul is not corruptible, as hath in part been already proved, and more fully, in the following discourse. So that Adam's soul, and the souls of his posterity spring not from each other, but all from God by creation.

Obj. 3. If the soul be created and infused immediately by God, either it comes out of his hands pure, or impure; if pure, how comes it to be defiled and tainted with sin? If impure, how do we free God from being the author of sin?

Sol. If the question be, whether souls be pure or impure, as soon as they are united with their bodies? The answer is, they are impure, and tainted as soon as united: For the union constitutes a child of Adam, and consequently a sinful impure creature. But if it respect the condition and state in which God created them, I answer with Baronius †. "They are created "neither morally pure, nor impure; they receive neither puri- "ty nor impurity from him, but only their naked essence, and "the natural powers and properties flowing therefrom." He inspires not any impurity into them; for he cannot be the au-

* *Pater neque producit animam filii ex aliqua re præ-existente; neque producit eam ex nulla re præ existente: hoc enim est creare; ergo nullo modo eam producit.* Baronii differt. secunda de Origine Animæ, p. 120.

† *Animæ nostræ a Deo creante neque accipunt puritatem, seu justitiam; neq; impuritatem et propensionem ad malum: Sed tantum essentiam spiritualem, et proprietates ab essentia dimanantes.* Baroni exercit. p. 103.

thor of sin, who is the revenger of it. Nor doth he create them in their original purity and rectitude; for the sin of Adam lost that, and God justly withholds it from his posterity. Who wonders (saith ‡ one) to see the children, the palaces, and gardens of traitors to droop and decay, and the arms of his house, and the badge of his nobility, to be defaced and reversed? That which is abused by man to the dishonour of God, may justly be destroyed (I add in this case, or *with-held*) by God to the detriment of man. Adam voluntarily and actually deprived himself, and meritoriously deprived all his posterity of that original righteousness and purity in which he was created. As an holy God, he cannot inspire any impurity, and as a just and righteous God, he may, and doth with-hold, or create them void and destitute of that holiness, and righteousness, which was once their happiness and glory.

Obj. 4. But how come they then to be defiled and tainted with original sin? It is confessed God did not impure them, and the body cannot; for its being matter, cannot act upon a spirit; yea, of itself it is a dead lump, and cannot act at all.

Sol. What if this be one of those mysteries reserved for the world to come, about which we cannot in this state solve every difficulty that may be moved? Must we therefore deny its divine original? What if I cannot understand some mysteries, or answer some questions about the *hypostatical union* of the two natures, in the wonderful person of our *Emmanuel*? Must I therefore question whether he be Θεανθρωπος, God-man? We must remain ignorant of some things about our souls, till we come into the condition of the spirits of just men made perfect ‖. Mean time, I think it much more our concernment to study how we may get sin out of our souls, than to puzzle our brains to find how it came into them.

But that the *objector* may not take this for an handsome slide, or go by to this great objection, I return to it, in a few particulars.

(1.) That I think not original sin follows either part singly; it comes in neither by the soul alone, nor by the body alone, apart from the soul; but upon the union and conjunction of both in one person. 'Tis the union of these two which constitutes a

‡ Jenkins on Jude, Vol. 1. p. 5, 9.

‖ Man since the fall, being less than himself, understands not himself; nor will he fully, till he be fully restored to himself in glory. *Norton's Orth. Evang. p.* 237.

child of Adam, and as such only we are capable of being infected with his sin.

(2.) * And whereas it is so confidently asserted in the objection, that sin cannot come into the soul by, or from the body, because it being matter, cannot act upon a spirit: I say, this is *gratis dictum*, easily spoken, but difficultly proved. Cannot the body act upon, or influence the soul? Pray then how comes it so pass that so many souls become foolish, forgetful, injudicious, *&c.* by their union with ill-disposed bodies? Nothing is more sensible, plain and evident, than that there is a reciprocal communication betwixt the soul and body. The body doth as really (though we know not how) affect the soul with its dispositions, as the soul influences it with life and motion. The more excellent any form is, the more intimate is its union and conjunction with the matter. The soul of man hath therefore a more intimate and perfect union with the body, than light hath with the air; which is made, by some, the best emblem, and similitude to shadow forth this union. But the union betwixt them is too intimate to be conceived by the help of any such similitudes. That this infection is by way of *physical agency*, as a rusty scabbard infects and defiles a bright sword, when sheathed therein; I will not confidently affirm as some do. It may be by way of *natural concomitancy*, as Estius will have it; or to speak, as Dr. Reynolds (modestly, and as becomes men that are conscious of darkness and weakness) by way of ineffable resultancy and emanation.

(3.) Upon the whole, original sin consists in two things. *viz.*

1. In the privation of that original rectitude which ought to be in us.
2. In that habitual concupiscence which carrieth nature to inordinate motions.

This privation and inordinate inclination, make up that original corruption, the rise whereof we are searching for: And so bring us as near as we can come, without a daring intrusion

* The soul (say some) in the moment of its creation and infusion by God, being united with the body by the plastic and formative virtue of the parental seed: the parent may be truly said to generate the man, though he do not produce the form: Because proper generation consists in the union, and not in the production of parts. So that original sin is not propagated from body to body, nor yet from soul to soul, but from man to man.

into unrevealed ſecrets, our ſolid *divines* proceed by theſe ſteps, in anſwering this objection.

(1.) If it be demanded how it comes to paſs that an *infant* becomes guilty of Adam's ſin; The anſwer is, becauſe he is a child of Adam by natural generation.

(2.) But why is he deprived of that original rectitude in which Adam was created? They anſwer, becauſe Adam loſt it by his ſin, and therefore could not tranſmit what he had loſt to his poſterity.

(3.) But how comes he to be inclined to that which is evil? Their anſwer is, becauſe he wants that original rectitude: For *whoſoever* wants original rectitude, naturally inclines to that which is evil. And ſo the propenſion of nature, to that which is evil, ſeems to be, by way of concomitancy, with the defect or want of original righteouſneſs.

And thus I have given ſome account of the nature and original of the ſoul of man: though alas! my dim eyes ſee but little of its excellency and glory. Yet, by what hath been ſaid, it appears the maſter-piece of all God's work of creation, in this lower world.

But beauſe I ſuſpect the deſcription I have given of it will be obſcure and cloudy to vulgar readers, of a plain and low capacity, by reaſon of divers *philoſophical* terms which I have been forced to make uſe of; and reckoning myſelf, a debtor to the weak and unlearned, as well as others, I will endeavour to ſtrip this deſcription of the ſoul, for their ſakes, out of thoſe artificial terms which darken it to them, and preſent it once more in the moſt plain and intelligible *epitome* I am capable to give it in; that ſo the weaker underſtanding may be able to form a true notion of the nature, and original of the ſoul, in this manner.

The ſoul a ſubſtance.

This ſoul of mine is a true and real being; not a fancy, conceit, a very nothing. It hath a proper and true being in itſelf, whether I conceit it or not. Nor indeed can I conceive of it, but by it. It is not ſuch a thing as whiteneſs is in ſnow, a mere accident, which depends upon the ſnow in which it is, for the being it hath, and muſt periſh as ſoon as the ſnow is diſſolved: My ſoul doth not ſo much depend upon my body, or any other fellow-creature for its being; but is as truly a ſubſtance as my body is, though not of ſo groſs and material a kind and nature. My ſoul can, and will ſubſiſt and remain what it is, when my body is ſeparated from it; but my body cannot ſubſiſt and remain what it now is, when my ſoul is ſeparated from it: So th-

I find my soul to be the most substantial and noble part of me; it is not my body, but my soul which makes me a man. And if this depart, all the rest of me is but a dead log, a lump of inanimate clay, a heap of vile dust and corruption. From this independent subsistence it hath in itself, and the dependence its properties and affections have upon it, I truly apprehend and call it a *substance*.

But a spiritual substance. But yet, when I call it a substance, I must not conceive of it as a gross material, palpable substance, such as my body is, which I can see and feel: No, there are *spiritual substances* as well as gross, visible, *material substances*. An angel is a spiritual *substance*, a real creature, and yet imperceptible by my sight or touch, such a substance is my soul. Spiritual substances are as real, and much more excellent than bodily substances are. I can neither see, hear, nor feel it, but I both see, hear, and feel by it.

A vital substance. My soul is also a vital substance. It is a principle of life to my body: It hath a life in itself, and quickens my body therewith. My soul is the spring of all the actions and motions of life which I perform. It hath been an error taken in from my childhood, that sense is performed in the outward organ, or members of my body; as touching in the hand, seeing in the eye, hearing in the ear, *&c.* in them, I say, and not only by them, as if nothing were required to make sense, but an *object* and an *organ*. No, no, it is not my eye that seeth, nor my ear that heareth, nor my hand that toucheth, but my soul, in and by them, performs all this. Let but an *apoplex* hinder the operations of my soul in the brain, and of how little use are my eyes, ears, hands or feet to me? My life is originally in my soul, and secondarily by way of communication in my body. So that I find my soul to be a *vital*, as well as a *spiritual substance*.

An immortal substance. And being both a vital and spiritual substance, I must needs conclude it to be an immortal substance. For in such a pure, spiritual nature, as my soul is, there can be found no seeds or principles of death. Where there is no composition, there will be no dissolution. My body indeed having so many jarring humours, mixed elements, and contrary qualities in it, must needs fall and die at last: but my soul was formed for immortality, by the simplicity and spirituality of its nature. No sword can pierce it from without, nor opposition can destroy it from within; man cannot, and God will not.

And being an immortal spirit, fitted and framed to live for ever, I find that God hath, answerably, endued and furnished it with an *understanding*, *will*, and *affections*, whereby it is capable of being wrought upon by the Spirit, in the way of grace and sanctification, in this world, in order to the enjoyment of God, its chief happiness, in the world to come.

Endued with understanding, will, and affections.

By this its *understanding*, I am distinguished from, and advanced above all other creatures in this world. I can apprehend, distinguish, and judge of all other intelligible beings. By my *understanding* I discern truth from falshood, good from evil; it shews me what is fit for me to chuse, and what to refuse.

To this faculty or power of *understanding*, my thoughts and conscience do belong; the former to my *speculative*, the latter to my *practical understanding*. My thoughts are all formed in my mind or understanding in innumerable multitudes and variety. By it I can think of things present, or absent; visible, or invisible; of God, or myself; of this world, or the world to come.

To my *understanding* also belongs my *conscience*, a noble, divine, and awful power: By which I summon and judge myself, as at a solemn *tribunal*; bind and loose, condemn and acquit myself and actions, but still with an eye and respect to the judgment of God. Hence are my best comforts, and worst terrors.

This *understanding* of mine is the director and guide of my *will*, as the *counsellor*; and my will is as the *prince*: It freely chuseth and refuseth, as my understanding directs and suggests to it. The members of my body, and the passions of my soul, are under its dominion: The former are under its absolute command, the latter under its suasions and insinuations, though not absolutely, yet always with effect and success.

And both my *understanding* and *will*, I find to have great influence upon my *affections*.

These passions and *affections* of my soul are of great use and dignity. I find them as manifold, as there are considerations of good and evil. They are the strong and sensible motions of my soul, according to my apprehensions of good and evil. By them my soul is capable of union with the highest good. By love and delight I am capable of enjoying God, and resting in him, as the centre of my soul. This noble *understanding*,

thoughts, conscience, will, passions, and *affections,* are the principal faculties, acts, and powers of this my high and heaven-born soul. And being thus richly endowed and furnished,

Created and infused with an inclination to the body.

I find it could never rise out of matter, or come into my body by way of generation; the souls of brutes, that rise that way, are destitute of understanding, reason, conscience, and such other excellent faculties, and powers, as I find in my own soul. They cannot know, or love, or delight in God, or set their affections on things spiritual, invisible, and eternal, as my soul is capable to do; it was therefore created and infused immediately into this body of mine by the Father of spirits, and that with a strong inclination, and tender affection to my flesh, without which it would be remiss and careless in performing its several duties and offices to it, during the time of its abode therein.

Fearfully and wonderfully, therefore, am I made, and designed for nobler ends and uses, than for a few days to eat, and drink, and sleep, and talk, and die. My soul is of more value than ten thousand worlds. *What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

U S E.

From the several parts and branches of this description of the soul, we may gather the choice fruits which naturally grow upon them, in the following *inferences* and deductions of truth and duty. For we may say of them all, what the *historian* doth of Palestine, that there is *nihil infructuosum, nihil sterile,* no branch or shrub is barren, or unfruitful. Let us then search it branch by branch: and,

1. *The soul is a substantial being.*

Infer. 1. From the substantial nature of the soul, which we have proved to be a being distinct from the body, and subsisting by itself, we are informed, *That great is the difference betwixt the death of a man, and the death of all other creatures in the world.* Their souls depend on, and perish with their bodies; but ours neither result from them, nor perish with them *. My body is not a body, when my soul hath forsaken it; but my soul will remain a soul, when this body is crumbled into dust. Men may live like beasts, a mere sensual

* So great a prerogative manifestly proves that the soul, which is the governing part, is not material and mortal, but of a superior and more excellent nature, greatly different from the condition of other souls. *Conimb. Disp. on separate souls, p.* 584.

life; yea, in some sense, they may die like beasts, a stupid death; but in this there will be found a vast difference: Death kills both parts of the beasts, destroys the matter and form; it toucheth only one part of man; it destroyeth the body, and only *dislodgeth* the soul, but cannot *destroy* it.

In some things Solomon shews the agreement betwixt our death and theirs, Eccles. iii. 19, 20, 21. "That which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth the beasts; even one thing befalleth them: As the one dieth, so dieth the other; all go to one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." We breathe the same common air they breath; we feel the same pains of death they feel; our bodies are resolved into the same earth theirs are. Oh! but in this is the difference, *The spirit of man goeth upward, and the spirit of a beast goeth downward to the earth.* Their spirits go two ways at their dissolution; the one to the earth, and the other to God that gave it; as he speaks, chap. xii. 7. Though our resolution and expiration have some agreement, yet great is the odds in the consequences of death to the one and the other. They have no pleasures nor pains besides those they enjoy or feel now; but so have we, and those eternal, or unspeakable too. The soul of man, like the bird in the shell, is still growing or ripening in sin or grace, till at last the shell breaks by death, and the soul flies away to the place it is prepared for, and where it must abide for ever. The body, which is but its shell, perisheth; but the soul lives when it is fallen away †.

How doth this consideration expose and aggravate the folly and madness of this sensual world, who herd themselves with beasts, though they have souls so near a kin to angels! The princes and nobles of the world abhor to associate themselves with *mechanics* in their shops, or to take a place among the sottish rabble upon an ale-bench; they know and keep their distance and *decorum*, as still carrying with them a sense of honour, and abhorring to act beneath it: But we equalize our high and noble souls in the manner of life with the beasts that perish. Our tables differ little from the *crib* at which they feed; or our houses from the *stalls* and *stables* in which they lie down to rest, in respect of any divine worship, or heavenly communication that is to be heard there. Happy had it been for such men (if

† They grow up together, and are again separated, and both return to whence they came; The earth downward, and the spirit upward. *Epicha.*

so they live and die) that their souls had been of no higher extraction, or larger capacity, or longer duration than that of a beast: For then, as their comforts, so also their miseries had ended at death. And such they will one day wish they had been.

A separate soul immediately capable of blessedness.

Infer. 2. The soul of man being a substance, and not depending in its being on the body, or any other fellow-creature, *There can be no reason, on the soul's account, why its blessedness should be delayed till the resurrection of the body.*

It is a great mistake (and it is well it is so) that the soul is capable only of social glory, or a blessedness in partnership with the body; and that it can neither exert its own powers, nor enjoy its own happiness, in the absence of the body. The opinion of a sleeping interval took its rise from this error (as it is usual for one mistake to beget another); they conceived the soul to be so dependent on the body, at least in all its operations, that when death rends it from the body, it must needs be left in a swoon, or sleep, unable to exert its proper powers, or enjoy that felicity which we ascribe to it in its state of separation.

But certainly its substantial nature being considered, it will be found, that what perfection soever the body receives from the soul, and how necessary soever its dependance upon it is *, the soul receives not its perfection from the body, nor doth it necessarily depend on it, in its principal operations; but it can live and act out of a body as well as in it. Yea, I doubt not but it enjoys itself in a much more sweet, and perfect liberty than ever it did, or could, whilst it was clogged and fettered with a body of flesh. "Doubtless, (saith † Tertullian) when it "is separated, and as it were strained by death, it comes out "of darkness into its own pure, perfect light, and quickly finds "itself a substantial being, able to act freely in that light." Before the eyes of the dead body are closed, I doubt not, but the believing soul, with open eyes, beholdeth the face of Jesus

* The rational soul receives no perfection from matter, which it could not receive without it. *Conimbr. disp.* 2. *art.* 3.

† *Procul dubio cum vi mortis exprimitur de concretione carnis, et ipsa expressione colatur, certo de oppanso corpore erumpit in apertum, ad meram et puram, et suam lucem, statim semetipsam in expeditione substantiæ recognoscit, ut de somno emergens ab imaginibus ad veritatem.* Tertul. in lib. de Anima.

Christ, Luke xxiii. 43. Philip. i. 23. But this will also be further spoken to hereafter.

Inser. 3. The souls of men being created immediately out of nothing, and not seminally traduced; it follows, *That all souls by nature are of equal value and dignity; one soul is not more excellent, honourable, or precious than another; but all by nature equally precious.*

The soul of the poorest beggar that cries at the door for a crust, is, in its own nature, of equal dignity and value with the soul of the most glorious monarch that sits upon the throne. And this appears to be so,

1. Because all souls flow out of one and the same fountain, *viz.* the creating power of God. They were not made of better or worse, finer or coarser matter, but ἐκ μὴ ὄντων, out of nothing at all. The same Almighty Power was put forth to the forming of one, as of another. *All souls are mine*, saith he that created them, Ezek. xviii. 4. the soul of the child as well as of the father; the soul of the *beggar* as well as of the *king*; those that had no pre-existent matter, but received their beings from the same efficient cause, must needs be equal in their original nature and value. The bodies of men, which are formed out of matter, do greatly differ from one another; some are moulded (as we say) *e meliori luto*, out of better and finer clay; some are more exact, elegant, vigorous and beautiful than others; but souls having no matter of which they consist, are not so differenced.

2. All souls are created with a capacity of enjoying the infinite and blessed God. They need no other powers, faculties, or capacities than they are by nature endued with (if these be but sanctified and devoted to God) to make them equally happy and blessed with them that are now before the throne of God in heaven, and with unspeakable delight and joy behold his blessed face. We pass through the fields, and take up an egg which lies under a clod, and see nothing in it but a little squalid matter; yea, but in that egg is seminally and potentially contained such a melodious lark as it may be at the same time we see mounting heavenward, and singing delicious notes above. So 'tis here, those poor despised souls, that are now lodged in crazy, despicable bodies on the earth, have, in their natures, a capacity for the same employments and enjoyments with those in heaven. They have no higher original than these have, and these have the same capacity and ability with them. They are beings improvable by grace, to the highest perfections attainable by any creature. If thou be never so mean, base, and despicable a creature, in

other reſpects, yet haſt thou a ſoul, which hath the ſame alliance to the Father of ſpirits, the ſame capacity to enjoy him in glory, that the moſt excellent and renowned ſaints ever had.

3. All ſouls are rated and valued in God's book, and account, at one and the ſame price; and therefore, by nature are of equal worth and dignity. Under the law, the rich and the poor were to give the ſame ranſom, Exod. xxx. 15. "The rich ſhall not "give more, and the poor ſhall not give leſs than half a ſhekel." The redemption of ſouls, by the blood of Chriſt, coſts one and the ſame price. The pooreſt and the moſt deſpiſed ſoul that believes in Jeſus, is as much indebted to him for the ranſom of his ſoul, as the greateſt and moſt illuſtrious perſon in the world. Moſes, Abraham, Paul, *&c.* did not coſt Chriſt any thing more than poor Lazarus, or the meaneſt among all the ſaints did. "The righteouſneſs of Chriſt is unto all, and upon all that be-"lieve, and there is no difference," Rom. iii. 22.

But yet we muſt not underſtand this *parity* of human ſouls univerſally, or in all reſpects. Tho' being of one *ſpecies* or common nature, they are all equal, and thoſe of them that are purchaſed by the blood of Chriſt are all purchaſed at one rate; yet there are divers other reſpects and conſiderations, wherein there are remarkable differences betwixt ſoul, and ſoul. As, (1.) Some ſouls are much better lodged and accommodated in their bodies than others are, though none dwell at perfect reſt and eaſe. God hath lodged ſome ſouls in ſtrong, vigorous, comely bodies; others in feeeble, crazy, deformed, and uncomfortable ones. The hiſtorian ſaith of Galba, *Anima Galbae male habitat*; the ſoul of Galba dwelt in an ill body. And a much better man than Galba was as ill accommodated. John wiſhes in behalf of his beloved Gaius, that his body might but proſper as his ſoul did, epiſtle iii. ver. 2. Timothy had his often infirmities. Indeed the world is full of inſtances and examples of this kind. ‡ If ſome ſouls had the advantages of ſuch bodies as others have, who make little or very bad uſe of them; oh, what ſervice would they do for God! (2.) There is a remarkable difference alſo betwixt ſoul, and ſoul, in reſpect of natural gifts and abilities of mind. Some have great advantages above others in this reſpect. The natural ſpirits and organs of the body being more briſk and apt, the ſoul is more vegete, vigorous, and able to exert itſelf in its functions and operations. How clear,

‡ Toſtatus biſhop of Abulum had ſo ſtrong and firm a conſtitution to endure ſevere ſtudies, that he is ſaid *ænea inteſtina habuiſſe*, to have had a body of braſs.

nimble, and firm, are the apprehenſions, fancies, and memories of ſome ſouls beyond others! What a prodigy of memory, fancy, and judgment, was father Paul the Venetian! and Suarez, of whom Strada ſaith, "Such was the ſtrength of his parts, "that he had all St. Auguſtine's works (the moſt copious and "various of all the fathers) as it were by heart, *ſo that I have* "*ſeen him*, ſaith he *, *readily pointing with the finger to any place* "*or page he diſputed of.*" Our Dr Reynolds excelled this way, to the aſtoniſhment of all that knew him, ſo that he was a *living library*, a third *univerſity*. But above all, the character given by Vives of Budaeus is amazing, *That there was nothing written in* Greek *or* Latin *which he had not turned over and examined; that both languages were alike to him, ſpeaking either with more facility than he did the* French, *his mother tongue; and all by the penetrating force of his own natural parts, without a tutor;* "*ſo* "*that* † France *never brought forth a man of ſharper wit, more* "*piercing judgment, exact diligence, and greater learning, nor,* "*in his time*, Italy *itſelf.*" Foelix et foecundum ingenium, quod in ſe uno invenit, et doctorem, et diſcipulum! *A happy and fruitful wit, which in itſelf found both a maſter and a ſcholar!* And yet Paſquier relates what is much more admirable of a young man, who came to *Paris* in the 20th year of his age, and in the year 1445, which ſhewed himſelf ſo excellent and exact in all the arts, ſciences, and languages, that if a man of an ordinary good wit, and ſound conſtitution, ſhould live an hundred years, and during that time ſtudy inceſſantly, without eating, drinking, ſleeping, or any recreation, he could hardly attain to that perfection. (3.) And yet a far greater difference is made betwixt one ſoul and another, by the ſanctifying work of the Spirit of God. This makes yet a greater diſparity; for it alters and new-molds the frame and temper of the ſoul, and reſtores the loſt image of God to it; by reaſon whereof the *righteous* is truly ſaid to be "more "excellent than his neighbour," Prov. xii. 26. This ennobles the ſoul, and ſtamps the higheſt dignity and glory upon it, that it is capable of in this world. It is true, it hath naturally an excellency and perpetuity in it above other beings; as *cedar* hath not only a beauty and fragrancy, but a ſoundneſs and durability far beyond other trees of the wood: but when it comes under the

* *Satim quo loco quaque pagina diſſeruerit, ea ſuper re expedite detentem, ab digito commonſtratem ſæpe vidimus.*

† *Quo viro Gallia, acutiore ingenio, acriore judicio, exactiore diligentia, majore eruditione, nullam unquam produxit: hoc vero ætate nec Italia quidem.* Lud. Viv. in 17 cap. de Civ. Dei.

sanctification of the Spirit, then it is a *cedar* over-laid with gold. (4.) Lastly, a wonderful difference will be made betwixt one soul and another, by the judgment of God in the great day. Some will be blessed, and others cursed souls, Matth. xxv. 46. some received into glory, others shut out into everlasting misery; Matth. viii. 11, 12. "Many shall come from the East, and "West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, "in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom "shall be cast out into outer darkness, there shall be weeping "and gnashing of teeth." And that which will be the sting and aggravation of the difference which will then be made, will be this parity and equality in the nature and capacity of every soul: by reason whereof they, that perish, will find they were as naturally capable of blessedness, as those that enjoy it; and that it was their own inexcusable *negligence* and *obstinacy* that were their ruin.

Infer. 4. If God be the immediate Creator, and former of the soul of man, *Then sin must needs involve the most unnatural evil in it, as it is an horrid violation of the very law of nature.*

III. *The soul a created substance.* No title can be so full, so absolute, as that which creation gives. How clear is this in the light of reason? If God created my soul, then my soul had once no being at all: that it had still remained nothing, had not the pleasure of its Creator chosen and called it into the being it hath, out of the millions of mere possible beings: for as there are millions of possible beings, which yet are nothing; so there are millions of possible *beings*, which never shall be at all. So that since the pleasure, and power of God was the only fountain of my being, he needs *must* be the rightful owner of it. What can be more his own, than that whose very being flowed merely from him, and which had never been at all, had he not called it out of nothing?

And seeing the same pleasure of God, which gave it a being, gave it also a reasonable being, capable of, and fitted for moral government, by laws, which other inferior natures are incapable of; it must needs follow that he is the supreme governor, as well as the rightful owner of this soul.

Moreover, it is plain that he who gave my soul its being, and such a being, gave it also all the good it ever had, hath, or shall have; and that it neither is, nor hath any thing but what is purely from him: and therefore he must needs be my most bountiful benefactor, as well as absolute owner, and supreme governor. There is not a soul which he hath created but stands bound to him, in all these ties and titles. Now for such

a creature to turn rebellioufly upon its abfolute Owner, whofe only, and wholly it is; upon its fupreme Governor, to whom it owes entire and abfolute obedience; upon its bountiful benefactor, from whom it hath received all, and every mercy it ever had, or hath; to violate his laws, flight his fovereignty, defpife his goodnefs, contemn his threatnings, pierce his very heart with grief, darken the glory of all his attributes, confederate with Satan his malicious enemy; and ftrike, as far as a creature can ftrike, at his very being (for in a fenfe, *Omne peccatum eft Decidium*, every fin ftrikes at the life and very exiftence of God): Blufh, O heavens, at this, and be ye horribly afraid! O curfed fin, the evil of all evils, which no epithet can match; no name worfe than its own can be invented, *finful fin*. This is as if fome venomous branch fhould drop poifon upon the root that bears it. Love and gratitude to benefactors, is an indelible principle engraven by nature upon the hearts of all men. It teacheth children to love and honour their parents, who yet are but mere inftruments of their being. O how juft muft their perdition be, who caffing off the very bonds of nature, turn again with enmity againft that God, in whom they both live, and move, and have their being! O think, and think again, on what an * holy man once faid; What a fad charge will this be againft many a man at the great day, when God fhall fay, Hadft thou been made a dog, I never had had fo much difhonour as I have had? It is pity God fhould not have honour from the meaneft creature that ever he made, from every pile of grafs in the field, or ftone in the ftreet; much more that he fhould not have glory from a foul more precious and excellent than all the other works of his hands. Surely it is better for us, our fouls had ftill remained only in the number of poffible beings, and had never had an actual exiftence in the fecond rank of beings, but a very little lower than the angels; than that we fhould be ftill difhonouring God by them. O that he fhould be put to levy his glory from us paffively; that it fhould be with us as it was with Nebuchadnezzar, from whom God had more glory when he was driven out amongft the beafts of the field, than when he fat on the throne. In like manner, his glory will rife paffively from us, when driven out among devils, and not actively and voluntarily, as from the faints.

Infer. 5. If God create and infpire the reafonable foul immediately, *This fhould inftruct and incite all Chriftian parents to*

* Mr. Burrough's Excellency of the foul of man, *p.* 232.

pray earneſtly for their children, not only when they are born into the world, but when they are at firſt conceived in the womb.

It is of great concernment both to us and our children, not only to receive them from the womb, with bodies perfectly and comely faſhioned; but alſo with ſuch ſouls inſpired into them, whereby they may glorify God to all eternity. It is natural to parents to deſire to have their children full and perfect in all their bodily members; and it would be a grievous affliction to ſee them come into the world defective, monſtrous, and miſhapen births; ſhould a leg, an arm, an eye be wanting, ſuch a defect would make their lives miſerable, and the parents uncomfortable. But how few are concerned with what ſoul they are born into the world? "Good God, (ſaith ‡ Muſculus), "how few ſhall we find, who are equally ſolicitous to have ſuch "children as may live piouſly and honeſtly, as they are to leave "them inheritances upon which they may live ſplendidly and "bravely?" It pleaſeth us to ſee our own image ſtamped upon their bodies; but, O! how few pray, even whilſt they are in the womb, that their ſouls may, in due time, bear the image of the heavenly, and not animate and uſe the members of their bodies, as weapons of unrighteouſeſs againſt the God that formed them?

Certainly, except they be quickened with ſuch ſouls, as may in this world be united with Chriſt, better had it been for them that they had periſhed in the womb, whilſt they were pure *embryo's* and had never come into the number and account of men and women; for ſuch *embryo's* go for nothing in the world, having only rudiments and rough draughts of bodies, never animated and informed by a reaſonable ſoul, Job iii. 11, 12. But as ſoon as ſuch a ſoul enters into them, though for never ſo little a time, it entails eternity upon them. We alſo know that as ſoon as ever God breathes, or infuſes their ſouls into them, ſin preſently enters, and death by ſin, and that by us, as the inſtruments of conveying it to them: which ſhould have the efficacy of a mighty argument with us to lay our prayers and tears for mercy in the very foundation of that union.

Think on this particularly, you that are mothers of children, when you find the fruit of the womb quickened within you, that you then bear a creature within you of more value than

‡ *Bone Deus! quam paucos reperias qui tam ſoliciti quomodò pie et honeſte vivam filii, quam curant ut amplam relinquant illis hæreditatem qua poſt obitum illorum ſplendide et otioſe declientur?* Muſculus in 8 Gen.

all this visible world; a creature, upon whom, from that very moment, an eternity of happiness or misery is entailed; and therefore it concerns you to travail as in pain for their souls, before you feel the sorrows and pangs of travail for their bodies. O what a pity is it, that a part of yourselves should eternally perish! that so rare and excellent a creature as that you bear, should be cast away for ever, for want of a new creation superadded to that it hath already! O let your cries and prayers for them, anticipate your kisses and embraces of them. If you be faithful and successful herein, then happy is the womb that bears them; if not, happy had it been for them, that the knees had prevented them, and the breasts they have sucked. O! ye cannot begin your suits for mercy too early for them, nor continue them to long, though your prayers measure all the time betwixt their conception and their death.

Infer. 6. Moreover, if God hath created our souls vital substances, to animate and act those bodies, *How indispensably necessary is it that such a principle of spiritual life, do quicken and govern that soul which quickens and governs our bodies and all the members of them?* Otherwise, *though in a natural sense we have living souls, yet they are dead whilst they live.* IV. A vital substance.

The apostle, in 1 Cor. xv. 45, 46., compares the animal life we live, by the union of our souls and bodies, with the spiritual life we live, by the union of our souls with Jesus Christ. And so it is written, (*viz.* in my text), "The first man Adam "was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening "Spirit." He opposes the animal to the spiritual life, and the two Adams, from whom they come; and shews, in both respects, the excellency of the spiritual above the animal life; not in point of *priority*, for that which is natural is before that which is spiritual, (and it must be so, because the natural soul is the recipient subject of the Spirit's quickening and sanctifying operations); but in point of dignity and real excellency. To how little purpose, or rather to what a dismal and miserable purpose are we made living souls, except the Lord from heaven, by his quickening power, make us spiritual and holy souls? The natural soul rules and uses the body, as an * artificer doth his tools: and except the Lord renew it by grace, Satan will rule that which rules thee, and so all thy members will be instruments of

* The body bears resemblance to an organ, the soul to an artist. *Iren. b.* 2.

iniquity to fight againſt God. "The actions performed by "our bodies, are juſtly reputed and reckoned by God to the "ſoul †," becauſe the ſoul is the ſpring of all its motions, the fountain of its life and operations. What it doth by the body, its inſtrument, is, as if it were done immediately by itſelf; for without the ſoul it can do nothing.

V. A ſpiritual ſubſtance.

Infer. 7. Moreover, from the immaterial and ſpiritual nature of the ſoul, we are informed, *That communion with God, and the enjoyment of him, are the true and proper intentions and purpoſes for which the ſoul of man was created.*

Such a nature as this, is not fitted to live upon groſs, material, and periſhing things, as the body doth. The food of every creature is agreeable to its nature; one cannot ſubſiſt upon that what another doth: as we ſee among the ſeveral ſorts of animals, what is food to one, is none to another. In the ſame plant is found a root which is food for ſwine, a ſtalk which is food for ſheep, a flower which feeds the bee, a ſeed on which the bird lives: the ſheep cannot live upon the root, as the ſwine doth; nor the bird upon the flower, as the bee doth: but every one feeds upon the different parts of the plant, which are agreeable to its nature. So it is here, our bodies being of an earthly, material nature, can live upon things earthly and material, as moſt agreeable to them; they can reliſh and ſuck out the ſweetneſs of theſe things; but the ſoul can find nothing in them ſuitable to its nature and appetite; it muſt have ſpiritual food, or periſh. It were therefore too brutiſh and unworthy of a man that underſtood the nature of his own ſoul, to chear it up with the ſtores of earthly proviſion made for it, as he did, Luke xii. 20. "I will ſay to my ſoul, Soul, thou haſt "much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, eat, "drink, and be merry." Alas! the ſoul can no more eat, drink, and be merry with carnal things, than the body can with ſpiritual and immaterial things: it cannot feed upon bread that periſheth, it can reliſh no more in the beſt and daintieſt fare of an earthly growth, than the white of an egg: but bring it to a reconciled God in Chriſt, to the covenant of grace, and the ſweet promiſes of the goſpel; ſet before it the joys, comforts and earneſts of the Spirit; and if it be a ſanctified renewed ſoul, it can make a rich feaſt upon theſe. Theſe make it a feaſt of

† *Omnia quocunque fecerit corpus, ſive bonum, ſive malum, animæ reputantur.* Origen in Job.

fat things, full of marrow, as it is expressed, Isa. xxv. 6. Spiritual things are proper food for spiritual and immaterial souls.

Infer. 8. The spiritual nature of the soul farther informs us, *That no acceptable service can be performed to God, except the soul be employed and engaged therein.* VI. A spiritual substance.

The body hath its part and share in God's worship, as well as the soul; but its part is inconsiderable, in comparison; Prov. xxiii. 26. "My son give me thy heart," *i. e.* thy soul, thy spirit. The holy and religious acts of the soul are suitable to the nature of the object of worship: John iv. 24. "God is a Spirit, and "they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in "truth." Spirits only can have communion with that great Spirit. They were made spirits for that very end, that they might be capable of converse with the Father of Spirits. "They that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in "truth;" that is, with inward love, fear, delight, and desires of soul, that is, to worship him in our spirits; and *in truth, i. e.* according to the rule of his word which prescribes our duty. *Spirit* respects the inward power; *truth* the outward form. The former strikes at hypocrisy, the latter at superstition and idolatry: the one opposes the inventions of our heads, the other the looseness and formality of our hearts.

No doubt but the service of the body is due to God, and expected by him: for both the souls and bodies of his people are bought with a price, and therefore he expects we glorify him with our souls and bodies, which are his: but the service of the body is not accepted of him, otherwise than it is animated and enlivened by an obedient soul, and both sprinkled with the blood of Christ. Separate from these, bodily exercise profits nothing, 1 Tim. iv. 8. What pleasure can God take in the fruits and evidences of mens hypocrisy? Ezek. xxxiii. 31.

Holy Paul appeals to God in this matter; Rom. i. 9. "God "is my witness (saith he) whom I serve with my spirit;" *q. d.* I serve God in my spirit, and he knows that I do so. I dare appeal to him who searches my heart, that it is not idle and unconcerned in his service. The Lord humble us, the best of us, for our careless, dead, gadding, and vain spirits, even when we are engaged in his solemn services. Oh that we were once so spiritual, to follow every excursion from his service with a groan, and retract every wandering thought with a deep sigh! Alas, a cold and wandering spirit in duty is the disease of most men, and the very temper and constitution of unsanctified ones. It is a weighty and excellent expression of the Jews, in their Eucho-

logium or prayer-book, "* Wherewithal shall I come before "his face, unless it be with my spirit? For man hath nothing "more precious to present to God than his soul." Indeed it is the best man hath: thy heart is thy *totum posse*: it is all that thou art able to present to him. If thou cast thy soul into thy duty, thou dost as the poor widow did, cast in all that thou hast: and in such an offering the great God takes more pleasure than in all the external, costly, pompous ceremonies, adorned temples, and external devotions in the world. It is a remarkable and astonishing expression of his own in this case, Isa. lxvi. 1, 2. "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth "is my footstool: Where is the house that ye built me? and "where is the place of my rest? For all these things have "mine hands made, and all these things have been, saith the "Lord; but unto this man will I look, even to him that is poor, "and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word;" *q. d.* Think not to please me with magnificent temples, and adorned altars; if I had pleasure in such things, heaven is a more glorious throne than any you can build me; and yet I have more delight in a poor contrite spirit, that trembles with an holy awe and reverence at my word, than I have in heaven or earth, or all the works of my hands in either. Oh! if there had been more trembling at his word, there had not been such trembling as now there is, under fears of the loss and removal of it. Some can superstitiously reverence and kiss the sacred dust of the sanctuary, as they call it, and express a great deal of zeal for the externals of religion, but little consider how small the interest of these things is in religion, and how little God looks at, or regards them.

Infer. 9. *How much more are the spirits of men sunk by sin, below the dignity and excellency of their nature?*

Our souls are spirits by nature, yet have they naturally no delight in things spiritual: they decline that which is homogeneal and suitable to spirits, and relish nothing but what is carnal and unsuitable to them. How are its affections inverted and misplaced by sin! That noble, spiritual, heaven-born creature the soul, whose element and centre God alone should be, is now fallen into a deep oblivion both of God and itself, and wholly spends its strength in the pursuit of sensual and earthly enjoyments, and becomes a mere drudge and slave to the body. Car-

* פֶּן־יִגְבְּרוּ־אִם כְּרוּחִי׳ אַרְזֵלִיאֵשׁ נִבְבַר מִנְּפֶשׁר חִכְמָה אֶקְרֵם h. e. *Qua re potius præveniam faciem ejus, nisi spiritu meo? nihil enim est homini precio sius anima sua.*

nal things now meaſure out and govern its delights and hopes, its fears and ſorrows. Oh! how unſeemly is it, to behold ſuch a high-born ſpirit lacqueying up and down the world in the ſervice of the periſhing fleſh. "Their heart (ſaith the prophet) "goeth after their covetouſneſs," Ezek. xxxiii. 31. as a ſervant at the beck or nod of his maſter.

Oh, how many are there to be found in every place who melt down the precious affections and ſtrength of their ſouls, in ſenſitive brutiſh pleaſures and delights? James v. 5. "Ye "have lived in pleaſures upon earth," as the fiſh in the waters, or rather as the eel in the mud; never once lifting up a thought or deſire to the ſpiritual and eternal pleaſures that are at God's right hand.

Our creation did not ſet us ſo low; we are made capable of better and higher things.

God did not inſpire ſuch a noble, excellent, ſpiritual ſoul into us, merely to ſalt our bodies, or carry them up and down this world for a few years, to gaze at the vanities of it. It was a great ſaying of an Heathen, "I am greater, and born to great-"er things, than that I ſhould be a ſlave to my body †." We have a ſpirit about us, that might better underſtand its original, and know it is not ſo baſe a being, as its daily employments ſpeak it to be. The Lord raiſe our apprehenſions to a due value of the dignity of our own ſouls, that we may turn from theſe ſordid employments with a generous diſdain, and ſet our affections on what is agreeable to, and worthy of an high-born ſpirit.

Infer. 10. Is the ſoul of man a vital, ſpiritual, and *immortal ſubſtance? Then it is no wonder, that we find the reſentments and impreſſions of the world to come, naturally engraven upon the ſouls of men all the world over.* Theſe impreſſions and ſentiments of another life after this, do as naturally and neceſſarily ſpring out of an *immortal nature*, as branches ſpring out of the body of a tree, or feathers out of the body of a bird. So fairly and firmly are the characters and impreſſions of the life to come ſealed upon the immortal ſpirits of all men, that no man can offer violence to this truth, but he muſt alſo do violence to his own ſoul, and unman himſelf by the denial of it, who feels not a chearineſs to ſpring from his abſolving, and an horror from his accuſing conſcience? neither of which could riſe from any other principle than this. We are

VII. *The ſoul an immortal ſubſtance.*

† *Major ſum, et ad majora natus, quam ut corporis mei ſim mancipium.* Seneca.

beings conscious to ourselves of a future state, and that our souls do not vanish when our breath doth; that we cease not to be, when we cease to breath.

And this is common to the most barbarous and savage Heathens: "They shew (saith the apostle) the work of the law "written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing them "witness, and their thoughts in the mean time accusing, or "else excusing one another." By the work of the law, understand the sum and substance of the ten commandments, comprising the duties to be done, and the sins to be avoided. This work of the law is said to be written upon the hearts of the Gentiles, who had no external written law; upon their hearts it was written, though many of them gave themselves over to all uncleanness; and they shewed or gave evidence and proof, that there was such a law written upon their hearts. They shewed it two ways: (1.) Some of them shewed it in their temperance, righteousness, and moral honesty, wherein they excelled many of us, who have far greater advantages and obligations. (2.) In the efficacy of their consciences; which, as it cleared and comforted them for things well done; so it witnessed against them, yea, judged and condemned them for things ill done. And these evidences of a law written on the heart are to be found, wherever men are to be found. Their ignorance and barbarity cannot stifle these sentiments, and impressions of a future state, and a just tribunal to which all must come. And the universality of it plainly evinces, that it springs not out of education, but the very nature of an immortal soul.

Let none say that these universal impressions are but the effects of an universal *tradition*, which have been, time out of mind, spread among the nations of the world: for as no such universal tradition can be proved; so if it could, the very propension that is found in the minds of all men living, to embrace and close with the proposals of a life to come, will evince the agreeableness of them to the nature of an immortal soul. Yea, the natural closing of the soul with these proposals, will amount to an evidence of the reality and existence of those invisible things. For as the natural senses, and their organs, prove that there are colours, sounds, savours, and juices; as well as, or rather because there are eyes, ears, *&c.* naturally fitted to close with, and receive them; so it is here, if the soul naturally looks beyond the line of time, to things eternal, and cannot bound and confine its thoughts and expectations within the too narrow limits of present things, surely there is such a future state, as well as souls made apprehensive of it, and propense to close

with the discoveries thereof. So natural are the notions of a future state to the souls of men, that those who have set themselves designedly to banish them, and struggled hard to suppress them, as things irksome and grievous to them, giving interruption to their sensual lusts and pleasures; yet still these apprehensions have returned upon them, and gotten a just victory over all their objections and prejudices; they follow them wheresoever they go; they can no more flee from them, than from themselves; whereby they evidence themselves to be natural and indelible things.

Infer. 11. Hath God endued the soul of man with understanding, will, and affections, whereby it is made capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying God? *It is then no wonder to find the malice and envy of Satan engaged against man, more than any other creature, and against the soul of man, rather than any thing else in man.*

VIII. *Endued with understanding, will, and affections.*

It grates that Spirit of envy, to see the soul of man adorning and preparing, by sanctification, to fill that place in glory from which he fell irrecoverably. It cut Haman to the very heart, to see the honour that was done to Mordecai; much more doth it grate and gall Satan, to see what Jesus Christ hath purchased, and designed for the souls of men. Other creatures being naturally incapable of this happiness, do therefore escape his fury; but men shall be sure to feel it, as far as he can reach them; 1 Pet. v. 8. "Your adversary the devil, goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." *He walks to and fro;* that speaks his diligence; *seeking whom he may devour;* that speaks his design; his restlessness in doing mischief, is all the rest and relief he hath in his own torments. It is a mark of pure and perfect malice, to endeavour to destroy, though he knows he shall never be successful in his attempts. We read of many bodies possessed by him; but he never takes up his quarters in the body of any but with design to mischief the soul. No room but the best in the house will satisfy him; no blood so sweet to him as soul-blood. If he raise persecution against the bodies of men, it is to destroy their souls: holiness is that he hates, and happiness is the object of his envy: the soul being the subject of both, is therefore pursued by him as his prey.

Infer. 12. Upon the consideration, both of its excellent nature, and divine original, it follows, *That the corruption and defacing of such an excellent creature by sin, deserves to be lamented,*

and greatly bewailed; and the recovery of it, by sanctification, to be studied, and diligently prosecuted, as the great concern of all men.

What a beautiful and blessed creature was the soul of man at first, whilst it stood in its integrity? His mind was bright, clear, and apprehensive of the law and will of God: His will chearfully complied therewith; his sensitive appetite and inferior powers stood in an obedient subordination. God made man upright, Eccles. vii. 29. יָשָׁר streight, and equal, bending to neither extreme. The law of God was fairly engraven upon the table of his heart. Principles of holiness and righteousness were inlayed in the frame of his mind, fitting him for an exact and punctual discharge of his duties both to God and man. This was the soundness of his constitution, the healthful temper of his inner man, whereby it became the very region of light, peace, purity, and pleasure. For think how serene, lightsome, and placid the state of the soul must be, in which there was no obliquity, not a jar with the divine will; but joy and peace continually transfused through all its faculties!

But sin hath defaced its beauty, razed out the divine image which was its glory, and stamped the image of Satan upon it; turned all its noble powers and faculties against the author and fountain of its being. Surely if all the posterity of Adam, from the beginning to the end of the world, should do nothing else but weep and sigh for the sin and misery of the fall, it could not be sufficiently deplored: Other sins, like single bullets, kill particular persons; but Adam's sin, like a chain-shot, mowed down all mankind at once. It murdered himself *actually*, all his posterity *virtually*, and Christ himself *occasionally*. Oh! what a black train of doleful consequents attend this sin! It hath darkned the bright eye of the soul's understanding, 1 Cor. ii. 14. made its complying and obedient will stubborn and rebellious, Job v. 40. rendered his tender heart obdurate and senseless, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. filled its serene and peaceful conscience with guilt and terror, Tit. i. 15. The consideration of these things is very humbling, and should cause those that glory in their high and illustrious descents, to wrap their silver star in Cypress, and cover all their glory with a mourning veil. But this is but one part of their duty.

How should this consideration provoke us to apply ourselves with the most serious diligence, to recover our lost beauty and dignity, in the way of sanctification! This is the great, and most proper use of the fall, as Musculus excellently speaks; *ut*

gratiam Chriſto eo ſubnixius ambiamus, to inflame our deſires the more vehemently after grace.

Sanctification reſtores the beauty of the ſoul, which ſin defaced, Eph. iv. 25. Col. iii. 10. Yea, it reſtores it with this advantage, that it ſhall never be loſt again; holineſs is the beauty of God impreſs'd upon the ſoul, and the impreſſion is everlaſting. Other beauty is but a fading flower: Time will plough deep furrows upon the faireſt faces, but this will be freſh to eternity.

All moral virtues, homilitical qualities, which adorn and beautify nature, and make it attractive and lovely in the eyes of men, are but ſeparable accidents, which diſcinds and crops off like a ſweet flower from the ſtalk, Job. iv. 21. "Doth not their "excellency that is in them go away?" But ſanctification is inſeparable, and will aſcend with the ſoul into heaven. Oh! that God would ſet the glaſs of the law before us, that we may ſee what defiled ſouls we have by nature, that we might come by faith to Jeſus Chriſt, who cometh to us by water and by blood, 1 John v. 6.

Infer. 13. To conclude. Upon the conſideration of the whole matter before us, if this excellent creature the ſoul receive both its being and excellencies from God; *Then he that formed it muſt needs have the full, and only right to poſſeſs and uſe it, and is therefore moſt injuriouſly kept out of the poſſeſſion of it by unſanctified and diſobedient perſons.*

The ſoul of man is a building of God; he hath laid out the treaſures of his wiſdom, power, and goodneſs in this noble ſtructure; he built it for an habitation for himſelf to dwell in; and indeed ſuch noble rooms as the underſtanding, will, and affections, are too good for any other to inhabit. But ſin hath ſet open the gates of this hallowed temple, let in the abomination which maketh deſolate. All the doors of the ſoul are barred, and chained up againſt Chriſt, by ignorance and infidelity; he ſeeks for admiſſion into the ſoul which he made, but findeth none. A forcible entry he will not make; but expects when the will ſhall bring him the keys of the ſoul, as to its rightful owner. So he expreſſeth himſelf to us in Rev. iii. 20. "Behold I ſtand at the door and knock: If any man hear my "voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and ſup "with him, and he with me." His *ſtanding at the door*, denotes his earneſt deſire and patient waiting, in the uſe of all thoſe means that are introductive of Jeſus Chriſt into the ſouls of men. His *knocking*, ſignifies the various eſſays he makes by

ordinances and providences externally, and the convictions and perſuaſions of his ſpirit, and the conſciences of ſinners internally: Every call of the word, and every conviction of conſcience is a call, a knock from heaven, at the door of the ſoul, for admiſſion of Chriſt into it. By *the ſoul's hearing his voice, and opening the door*, underſtand its approbation, and conſent to the motion and offer of God. By Chriſt's *coming in*, is meant his uniting that ſoul unto himſelf that opens to him. And as his *coming in* denotes union, ſo his ſupping with the ſoul, and the ſoul with him, denotes his ſweet communion; imperfect here, compleat and full in heaven.

O the admirable condeſcenſions of God to poor ſinners! The God that formed you with a word, and can as eaſily ruin you with a frown, yet waits at the gates of your ſouls for admiſſion into them. There be many ſouls within the ſound of this complaint, that have kept God out of his own right all their days. They have ſhut out Jeſus Chriſt, and delivered up their ſouls to Satan: If he but knock by a ſlight temptation, the door is preſently opened; but Jeſus Chriſt may wait in vain upon them from ſabbath to ſabbath, and from year to year: But the longeſt day of his patience hath an end; and there is a refuſal of grace, after which no more tenders of mercy ſhall ever be made.

What ſay you, Souls? Will you at laſt open the door to Jeſus Chriſt, or will you ſtill exclude him? If you will open to him, he will not come empty-handed, he will bring a feaſt with him, ſuch a feaſt as you never taſted any thing like it in your lives: But, if you will not open to him, then I call heaven and earth to witneſs againſt you this day, that you have once barred the doors of your ſoul againſt him, whoſe pleaſure and power gave them their very beings; againſt him, who is their ſovereign Lord, and rightful owner: And conſequently this act of yours muſt ſtop your mouths, and deprive you of all pleas and apologies when you ſhall knock hereafter at the door of mercy, and God ſhall ever ſhut it up againſt you, according to his juſt, but dreadful threatnings, Mat. vii. 22. Prov. i. 24, 25. And thus much of the divine original, and excellent nature of the ſoul of man.

Having taken a view of this excellent treature the ſoul, in opening the former propoſition; we come next to the conſideration of its union with the body, in this ſecond propoſition.

Doct. II. *That the ſouls and bodies of men are knit together, by the feeble band of the breath in their noſtrils.*

"There is (ſaith a learned * man) no greater myſtery in nature, than the union betwixt the ſoul and body; that a mind "and ſpirit ſhould be ſo tied and linked with a clod of clay, that "while that remains in a due temper, it cannot by any art or "power free itſelf. It can by an act of the will move an hand, "or a foot, or the whole body, but cannot move from it one inch. "If it move hither, or thither, or, by a leap upward do aſcend "a little, the body ſtill follows it; it cannot ſhake or throw it "off. We cannot take ourſelves out; by any allowable means "we cannot; nor by any at all (that are at leaſt, within mere "human power) as long as the temperament laſts. While that "remains, we cannot go; if that fail, we cannot ſtay; tho' "there be ſo many open avenues (could we ſuppoſe any mate-"rial bounds to them in, or exclude a ſpirit) we cannot go "out or in at pleaſure. A wonderful thing! and I wonder "we no more wonder at our own make and frames in this reſpect. "——What ſo much a-kin are a mind and a peace of earth, "a clod and a thought, that they ſhould be thus affixed to one "another?"

My deſign here is to ſhew by what ligament, tie, or bond it hath pleaſed the great and wiſe Creator, to affix and link theſe, ſo different parts of man together: And this Moſes in the text tells us, is no other but the breath of his noſtrils.

The breath and ſoul of man are two diſtinct things. His breath is not his ſoul, nor his ſoul his breath, but the *nexus* or bond that couples and unites his ſoul and body in a perſonal union. The body hath no life in itſelf, but its life reſults from its union with the ſoul, Jam. ii. 26. This union is maintained by the breath of our noſtrils, which upon that account is here called the *breath of life. Breath is an act of life, proceeding from the ſouls union with its body, and ending with the diſſolution of it.* Life is continued by its *reſpiration*, and ended by its *expiration.* Whilſt we live, and whilſt breath is in our bodies, are terms *ſynonimous.*

What breath is.

That little quantity of air, which we thus breathe in, and out at our noſtrils, is more to us, than all the three regions of air, which fill up the vaſt ſpace between earth and heaven. It is, in a ſenſe, our life.

For this uſe and office of reſpiration, the *lungs* were formed

* Mr. How in a funeral Sermon, p. 9, 10.

and placed where they are, not without the moſt wiſe counſel and direction of God. They are that organ in the † Body, which, by the help of that *artery* called *arteria trachea*, leading to them as a channel, for the paſſage of air from the mouth and noſtrils, the air is tranſmitted to, and ventilated by them for the refreſhment of the ‡ heart, and exhaling the fumes thereof.

What the lungs are.

The heart hath continual need of ſuch a vent and refreſhment; and therefore the lungs, like a pair of bellows, muſt be kept continually going. No longer than breath is going, is the heart a dying; that which ſtops the one, ſuffocates the other.

And here we may, with admiration, contemplate the wonders by which our lives are continued. Theſe lungs are the moſt frail and tender part of the body, and kept in continual motion and agitation; yet are made ſerviceable for ſeventy or eighty years together, which is the wonder of providence. Were a piece of braſs, iron or ſteel, kept in continual and inceſſant uſe, it would not endure half the time. In a word, the ‖ heart that noble part of the body, is the *ſhop* wherein the *ſpirits* are laboured and prepared, which therefore is in continual motion and heat; and ſo needs continual cooling and refreſhing. We can live no longer than it labours, it can labour no longer than it is refreſhed and cooled by reſpiration.

God hath therefore prepared the lungs for this ſervice; which being of a thin, porous, and ſpungy ſubſtance, can eaſily be

† The lungs are the inſtrument of breathing and reſpiration; to the lungs there lead a pipe, which is called the wind-pipe, formed for two uſes, *&c.*

‡ The heart is moved by a twofold motion, namely, that of its contraction, and dilatation, whereby its innate heat is mitigated and cooled by means of the air ſuck'd in. *Alſted. Theol. Nat. p.* 614.

‖ Becauſe the heart is the fountain of life, and the laborious forge where the animal ſpirits are framed; ſo that being in the poſture of a pendulum, it is agitated by a perpetual motion; by which means it is vehemently heated, even to ſo great a degree, that, unleſs that heat was moderated by reſpiration, of neceſſity it would happen, that both the natural heat and moiſture would be deſtroyed by the exceſſive heat of the heart. The lungs are nothing elſe but a certain kind of natural bellows, which by being dilated, draw in the air and tranſmit it to the heart, ſo that the heart, though always hot, is cooled by the air; which air, after being warmed within the receſſes of the heart, is again ſent out from the heart into the lungs, which by contracting themſelves, emit it again by expiration. *Keckerm. Phyſ. p.* 560-70.

dilated and contracted. By dilating themſelves, they attract and ſuck in the air into themſelves; firſt duly to prepare and temper it, and then communicate it to the heart for its refreſhment; which being quickly heated in the heart, is again breathed out by the lungs, by contracting themſelves again. This double motion of inſpiration and expiration, we call reſpiration; and this reſpiration is the bond that holds our ſouls and bodies together.

And indeed, this is but a feeble bond, a very ſlender and weak thread, which holds our ſouls and bodies in union. What more *volatile, evanid* and *uncertain*, than a puff of breath? The noſtrils are the outer door of the body, our breath is continually in our noſtrils; and how ſoon may that depart, which is day and night at the door, as if it were ſtill taking leave of us? Our breath is always going; and what is ſtill going, will be gone at laſt. How ſmall a difference is there betwixt reſpiration and expiration, a breathing and a breathleſs lump of clay? Breath cannot continue long, and life cannot ſtay a moment behind it, Pſal. civ. 29. "Thou takeſt away their breath, "they die, and return to their duſt." Life is breath given, and death is breath taken away. The breath of man is like a written ſentence, in which there are divers comma's, or ſhort pauſes, after which ſpeedily follows a full ſtop, and there's an end of it.

Some conceive Solomon points at the continual motion of the lungs, in that figurative and elegant deſcription of the death of man, * Eccleſ. xii. 6. "Or ever the ſilver cord be looſed, or "the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the "fountain, or the wheel be broken at the ciſtern." "The "double motion of the lungs he ſeems here to compare to the "double motion of the buckets in a well; the turn of the wheel "ſends one down, and draws the other up." But as we uſe to ſay proverbially, The bucket or pitcher that goes ſo often to the ciſtern or well, is broken at laſt: So much we ſay of theſe, they will fail at laſt. One ſitting by the bed-ſide of a dying perſon, ſighed out this compaſſionate expreſſion, *Ah! quid fumus?* His ſick friend hearing it, replyed *Pulvis et umbra fumus*, duſt, a ſhadow, a puff of wind. The wind without us is fickle and inconſtant to a proverb, and ſo is that within us

* The lungs are like the pulleys of a ciſtern, for as the pulley firſt lets down the buckets into the well, then raiſes it again, in like manner, the lungs by a perpetual motion attract and expel the air. *Alſted. Theol. nat. p.* 623.

100. Many grudge at the ſhortneſs of life; but conſidering the feebleneſs of this bond, we have more cauſe to wonder at the ſlowneſs of death. For let us ſeriouſly conſider the frailty of our breath, on a double account, *viz.*

1. In reſpect of our breathing inſtruments.

2. Or of breath-ſtopping accidents.

1. Great is the frailty of our breathing inſtruments. What is fleſh but weakneſs? even the moſt ſolid and ſubſtantial; it is as fading graſs, Iſa. xl. 6. "But our † lungs are the moſt *lax*, "ſpungy, and tender of all fleſh, if that which is ſo airy, light, "and ſpumous, deſerves the name of fleſh." And as it is the moſt frail of all fleſh, ſo it is in continual motion, labouring night and day, without reſt or intermiſſion; and that which wants alternate reſt cannot be durable. We ſee motion wears out the wheels of the watch, though made of braſs; but our *Strength* (as Job ſpeaks) *is not the ſtrength* of ſtones; *nor our bones* (the moſt ſolid, much leſs our lungs the moſt frail and feeble parts) *of braſs*. Beſide,

2. There are a multitude of breath-ſtooping accidents, which may, and daily do beat the laſt breath out of mens noſtrils, before any decay of nature cauſe it to expire.

Many mortal diſeaſes are incident to theſe frail and tender parts. Phthiſics, interenations, ulcers, eaſily bar the paſſage of our breath there; yea, and ſlighter accidents, which immediately touch not that part, are ſufficient to ſtop our breath, and diſlodge our ſouls. A *fly*, a *gnat*, the ſtone of a *raſin*, a *crumb* of bread, have often done it. There is not a *pore* in the body, but is a door large enough to let in death, nor a creature ſo deſpicably ſmall, but is ſtrong enough (if God commiſſionate it) to ſerve a writ of ejection upon the ſoul: The multitudes of diſeaſes are ſo many lighted candles put to this ſlender thread of our breath, beſides the infinite diverſity of external accidents, by which multitudes daily periſh. So that there are as great and aſtoniſhing wonders in our preſervation, as in our creation.

Infer. 1. *How admirable then is the myſtery of providence in the daily continuation of the breath of our noſtrils?*

That our breath is yet in our noſtrils is only from hence, that he who breathed it into them at firſt is our life, and the length of our days, as it is Deut. xxx. 20. It is becauſe our breath is in his hand, Dan. v. 23. not in our own, nor in our enemies hands. Till he take it away, none ſhall be able to do it; Pſal. civ. 29.

† The ſubſtance of the lungs is a lax ſpungy airy kind of fleſh, and like the coagulated from blood. *Alſted. Theol. nat. p.* 623.

"Thou takeſt away their breath, they die, and return to their "duſt."

It is neither food, nor phyſic, but God in and by them, that "holdeth our ſouls in life," Pſal. lxvi. 9. We hang every moment of our life over the grave, and the gulph of eternity, by this ſlender thread of our breath: But it cannot break, how feeble ſoever it be, till the time appointed be fully come. If it be not extinguiſhed and ſuffocated, as others daily are, it is becauſe he puts none of theſe diſeaſes upon us, as it is Exod. xv. 26. or if he do, yet he is *Jehovah Rophe*, the Lord that healeth us, as it follows in that text.

We live in the midſt of cruel enemies, yea, "among them "that breathe out cruelty," as the pſalmiſt complaineth, Pſal. xxvii. 12. Such breath would quickly ſuffocate ours, did not he, in whoſe hand ours is, wonderfully prevent it. Oh what cauſe have we to employ, and ſpend that breath in his praiſe, who works ſo many daily wonders to ſecure it!

Infer. 2. Is it but a puff of feeble breath which holds our ſouls and bodies in union? *Then every man is deeply concerned to make all haſte, to take all poſſible care and pains to ſecure a better, and more durable habitation for his ſoul in heaven, whilſt yet it ſojourns in this frail tabernacle of the body.*

The time is at hand, when all theſe comely and active bodies ſhall be ſo many breathleſs carcaſes, no more capable of any uſe or ſervice for our ſouls than the ſeats you ſit on, or the dead bodies that lie under your feet. Your breath is yet in your noſtrils, and all the means and ſeaſons of ſalvation will expire with it; and then it will be as impoſſible for the beſt miniſter in the world to help your ſouls, as for the ableſt Phyſician to recover your bodies. As phyſic comes too late for the one, ſo counſels and perſuaſions for the other.

Three Things are worth thinking on in this matter.

1. That you are not without the hopes and poſſibilities of ſalvation, whilſt the breath of life is in your noſtrils. A mercy, (how lightly ſoever you value it) that would raviſh with joy thoſe miſerable ſouls that have already ſhot the gulf of eternity, and turn the ſhrieks and groans of the damned unto joyful ſhouts and acclamations of praiſe. Poor wretch, conſider what thou readeſt; that thy ſoul is not yet in Chriſt, is thy greateſt miſery; but that yet it may be in Chriſt, is an unſpeakable mercy; though thy ſalvation be not yet ſecured, yet what a mercy is it that it is not deſperate?

2. When this uncertain breath is once expired, the laſt hope

of every unregenerate person is gone for ever: It is as impossible to recover hope, as it is to recover your departed breath, or recal the day that is past. When the breath is gone, the *compositum* is dissolved; we cease to be what we now are, and our life is as water spilt on the ground, which shall not be gathered up till the resurrection. Our life is carried like a precious liquor in a brittle glass, which death breaks to pieces. The spirit is immediately presented to God, and fixed in its unalterable state, Heb. ix. 27. All means of salvation now cease for ever; no *ambassadors* of peace are sent to the dead; no more calls or strivings of the spirit: no more space for repentance. O! what an inconceivable weight hath God hanged on a puff of breath!

3. And since matters stand thus, it is to be admired what shift men make to quiet themselves in so dangerous a state as most souls live in; quiet and unconcerned, and yet but one puff of breath betwixt them and hell! O the stupifying and besotting nature of sin! O the efficacy and power of spiritual delusions! Are our lives such a throng and hurry of business, that we have no time to go alone and think where we are, and whert we shortly must be? What shall I say? If bodily concerns be so weighty, and the matters of eternity such trifles; if meat and drink, and trade and children, be such great things, and Christ, and the soul, and heaven, hell and the world to come, such little things in your eyes, you will not be long in that opinion, I dare assure you.

Infer. 3. *Is the tie so weak betwixt our souls and bodies? How close and near then do all our souls confine and border upon eternity?*

There is no more but a puff of breath, a blast of wind betwixt this world and that to come. A very short step betwixt time and eternity: There is a breath which will be our last breath: respiration must, and will terminate in expiration: The dead are the *inhabitants*, and the living are *borderers* upon the invisible world. This consideration deserves a dwelling place in the hearts of all men, whether,

I. Regenerate, or

II. Unregenerate.

I. Regenerate souls should ponder this with pleasure. O it is transporting to think how small a matter is betwixt them and their complete salvation. No sooner is your breath gone, but the full desire of your hearts is come; every breath you draw, draws you a degree nearer to your perfect happiness; Rom. xiii. 11. "Now is your salvation nearer than when you believed;" therefore, both your chearfulness, and diligence should be greater

than when you were * in the infancy of your faith. You have run through a considerable part of your Christian course and race, and are now come nearer the goal and prize of eternal life. O despond not, loiter not now at last, who were so fervent and zealous in the beginning.

It is transporting to think how near you approach the region of light and joy. O that you would distinctly consider,

1. Where you lately were.
2. Where now you are.
3. Where shortly you shall be.

1. You that are now so near salvation, were lately very near unto damnation, there was but a puff of breath betwixt you and hell. How many nights did you sleep securely in the state of nature and unregeneracy? How quietly did you rest upon the brink of hell, not once imagining the danger you were in? Had any of those sicknesses you then suffered, been suffered by God, like a candle, to burn asunder this slender thread of life, which was so near them, you had been as miserable, and as hopeless, as those that now are roaring in the lowest hell. I have heard of one that rid over a dangerous bridge in the night, who, upon the review of the place next day, fell into a swoon, when he was sensible of that danger which the darkness of the night hid from him. O reader, shall not an escape from hell affect thee, as much as such an escape would do?

2. It is no less marvellous to consider where you now are; you that were afar off are now made nigh, Eph. ii. 13, You that were not beloved, are now beloved, Rom. ix. 25. You were in the state of death and condemnation. You are now passed from death to life, by your free justification, 1 John iii. 14. Your union with Christ hath set you free from condemnation, Rom. viii. 1. Die you must though Christ be in you, but there is no hazard, or hurt in your death. The stopping of your breath can put no stop to your happiness, it will hasten, not hinder it: If the pale horse come for you, heaven, not hell will now follow him; your sins are pardoned, the covenant of your salvation sealed. Death is disarmed of its fatal sting; and what then should hinder you from a like triumph, even upon your death-bed with that, 1 Cor. xv. 55. "O death, where is thy "sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

* He says this, because the faithful had been when they first believed more diligent and chearful in good works, but afterwards grew cold, or turned lukewarm. *Estius on the place.*

3. And yet you have more room for joy, whilſt you conſider where you muſt, and ſhall ſhortly be. You are now *in Chriſt*, but in a few days you ſhall be *with Chriſt* as well as in him; it is well now, but it will be better e'er long. Your ſin is now fully *pardoned*, but not fully *purged* out of your ſouls. Your *perſons* are freed from guilt, but your *hearts* are not either freed from filth or grief: But in a little time you ſhall be abſolutely and eternally freed from both. Your preſent condition is in heaven, compared with your former, and your future ſtate will be in heaven indeed, compared with your preſent. "The "path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, which ſhineth more "and more unto the perfect day," Prov. iv. 18.

II. But on the other ſide, what meditation can be more ſtartling and amazing to all the unregenerate, and chriſtleſs world? Ponder it, thou poor chriſtleſs, and unſanctified ſoul. Get thee out of the noiſe and clamour of this world, which makes ſuch a continual din in thine ears, and conſider how thou hangeſt over the mouth of hell itſelf, by the feeble threed which is ſpun every moment out of thy noſtrils; as ſoon as that gives way, thou art gone for ever. What ſhift do you make to quiet your fears, and eat, drink, and labour with any pleaſure? It is ſtoried of Dionyſius the tyrant, that when Damocles would have flattered him into a conceit of the perfection of his happineſs, as he was an abſolute ſovereign prince, and could do what he pleaſed with others, as his vaſſals; Dionyſius, to confute his fancy, cauſed him to be placed at a table richly furniſhed, and attended with the moſt curious muſic, but juſt over his head hanged a ſharp and heavy ſword by one ſingle hair; which when Damocles ſaw, no meat would go down with him, but he earneſtly begged for a diſcharge from that place. This is the lively emblem of the condition, thou unregenerate man.

There are *three* things in thy ſtate, ſadly oppoſed to the former ſtate laſt deſcribed.

1. The ſtate you were born in, was bad.
2. The ſtate you are now in, is worſe.
3. The ſtate you ſhall ſhortly be in, if you thus continue, will be unſpeakably worſt of all.

1. The ſtate you were born in, was a ſad ſtate; you were born in ſin, Pſal. li. 5. and under wrath, Eph. ii. 3. The womb of nature caſt you forth into this world, defiled and condemned creatures.

2. The ſtate you are in now, is much worſe than that you were born in: for what have you been doing ever ſince you were born, but treaſuring up wrath againſt the day of wrath?

Rom. ii. 5. For every ſand of time which run out of the glaſs of God's patience towards you, a drop of wrath hath been running into the vials of his indignation againſt you. Oh! what a treaſure of ſin and wrath then, is laid up in ſo many years as you have lived in ſin! Every ſin committed, every mercy abuſed, every call of God neglected, and ſlighted, adds ſtill more and more to this treaſure.

3. It will be much worſe ſhortly than it is now, except preventing, renewing grace ſtep in betwixt you and that wrath, into which you are haſtning ſo faſt. It is ſad to be under the *ſentence* of condemnation, but unſpeakably worſe to be under the *execution* of that ſentence. To be a *Chriſtleſs* man is lamentable, but to be a *hopeleſs* man is more lamentable. For though you be now without Chriſt, yet whilſt the breath of life is in your noſtrils, you are not abſolutely without hope: But when once that breath is gone, all the world cannot ſave or help you. Your laſt breath and your laſt hope expire together. Though you be under God's damning ſentence, yet that ſentence, through the riches of forbearance, is not executed, but as ſoon as you die, all that wrath which hanged over your heads, ſo many years, in the black clouds of God's threatenings, will pour down in a furious ſtorm upon you, which will never break up whilſt God is God. Oh! think, and think again, and let your thoughts think cloſe to this ſad and ſolemn ſubject, there is but a breath betwixt you and hell.

Infer. 4. *Doth God maintain your life by breath? Let not that breath deſtroy your life, which God gave to preſerve it.*

No man can live without breath; and yet ſome might live longer than they do, if their breath were better employed. "Some men's throats have been cut by their own tongues," as the * Arabian proverb intimates. Life and death (ſaith Solomon) are in the power of the tongue. Critics obſerve, that a *word* and a *plague* grow upon the ſame root in the Hebrew tongue. It is certain, that ſome mens breath hath been baneful poiſon, both to themſelves and others. It was a word that cut off the life of Adonijah, 1 Kings ii. 23. and thouſands, ſince his day, have died upon the point of the ſame weapon. It is therefore wholeſome advice that is given us, Pſal. xxxiv. 12. "What man is he that deſireth life, and loveth many days, "that he may ſee good; keep thy tongue from evil, and thy "lips from ſpeaking guile."

* *Cave, ne ſuriat lingua tua collum tuum.* Scal. Arab. Prov. Cent. I.

And the more evil the times are, the ſtricter guard we ſhould keep upon our lips. "It is an evil time, the prudent will keep "ſilence," Amos v. 13. When wicked men watch to make a man an *offender for a word*, as it is, Iſa. xxix. 20, 21. it behoves us to be upon our watch, that we offend not with our lips. It is good to keep, what is not ſave to truſt. David was a deaf and dumb man, when in the company of wicked men, Pſal. xxxviii. 13. he thought ſilence then to be his prudence. It is better they ſhould *call* you fools, than *find* you ſo.

Infer. 5. *Employ not that breath to the diſhonour of God, which was firſt given, and is ſtill graciouſly maintained by him for your comfort and good.*

It were better you had never breathed at all, than to ſpend your breath in profane oaths, or fooliſh and idle chat, whereby, at once, you wound the name of God, draw guilt upon your own ſouls, and help on the ruin of others. That is a ſtartling text, Mat. xii. 36. "But I ſay unto you, that every idle word "that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an acount thereof in the "day of judgment."

To give an account, is here, by a *metalepſis* of the antecedent for the conſequent, put for puniſhment in hell-fire, without an intervening change of heart, and ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus.

And there is more evil in this abuſe of our breath, than we can eaſily diſcern, eſpecially upon two accounts; (1.) Becauſe it is a ſin moſt frequently committed, and ſeldom repented of. The intercourſe betwixt the heart and tongue is quick, and the ſenſe of the evil as eaſily and quickly paſſeth away. (2.) Becauſe the poiſonous, and malignant influence thereof abides and continues long after: our words may miſchief others, not only a long time after they are ſpoken, but a long time after the tongue that ſpake them is turned to duſt. How many years may a fooliſh, or filthy word, a prophane ſcoff, an atheiſtical expreſſion, ſtick in the minds of them that heard them, after the ſpeaker's death: A word ſpoken is *phyſically* tranſient, and paſſed away with the breath that delivered it; but *morally*, it is permanent: For as to its moral efficacy, no more is required, but its objective exiſtence in the minds and thoughts of them that once heard it: And, upon that very ground, Suarez argues for a general judgment, after men have paſt at death their particular judgment; becauſe (ſaith he) long after that, abundance of good and evil will be done in this world by the dead, in the perſons of others that over-live them. For look, as it was ſaid of Abel, that being dead, he yet ſpeaketh; ſo it may be ſaid of Julius,

Porphyry, and multitudes of scoffing Atheists, that being dead they yet speak. Oh therefore get a sanctified heart to season your breath, that it may minister grace to the hearers.

Infer. 6. *Let your breath promote the spiritual life of others, as well as maintain the natural life in yourselves.*

Though the maintaining of your natural life be one end why God gave you breath, yet it is not the only, or principal end of it. Your breath must be food to others, as well as life to you: Prov. x. 21. "The lips of the righteous feed many." It will be comfortable to resign that breath to God at death, which hath been instrumental to his glory in this life. It was no low encomium Christ gave of the church, when he said, Cant. iv. 11. "Thy lips, oh my spouse, drop as the honey-comb, honey "and milk are under thy tongue." Sweet, wholsome, and pleasant words, drop from her lips. They drop (saith Christ) *as the honey-comb.* Some drops ever and anon fall actually, and others hang, at the same time, prepared and ready to fall. Such a prepared and habitual disposition should every Christian continually have. Your words may stick upon mens hearts to their edification and salvation, when you are in your graves. Your tongues may now sow that precious seed, which may spring up to the praise of God, though you may not live to reap the comfort of it in this world, John iv. 36, 37. 'Tis a rich expence of your breath, to bring but one soul to God, and yet God hath used the breath of one, as his instrument, to save, edify, and comfort the souls of thousands, Prov. xi. 30. "The "fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that winneth "souls is wise." The good Lord make all his people wise in this.

Surely, whether we consider the invaluable worth and preciousness of souls, the benefits you have had from the breath of others yourselves, the innate property of grace, where-ever it is, to diffuse and communicate itself, how short a time you have to breathe, and how comfortable it will be, when you breathe your last, to remember how it hath been employed for God, all this should open your lips, to counsel, reprove, and comfort others, as often as opportunity is ministred.

Did Christ spend his blood for our souls, and shall not we spend our breath for them! Oh! let our lips dispense knowledge. If you will not spend your breath for God, how will you spend your blood for him? If you will not speak for him, I doubt you will not die for him. Away with a sullen reservedness, away with unprofitable chat; all subjects of discourse are not fit for a Christian's lips. 'Tis a grave admonition God once

gave his people by the pen of a faithful * minister. "You may "rue (saith he) the opportunities you have lost. Here lay a "poor wretch with one foot in hell, would he not have started "back, if he had had light to discover his danger? Well, you "are now together, something you must say; the same breath "would serve for a compassionate admonition, as for a com- "placent impertinency, which will redound to neither of your "advantages. You part, the man dies, and in the midst of "hell cries out against you, one word of yours might have "saved me; you had me in your reach, you might have told "me my danger; you forbore, I hardened; the Lord reward "your negligence."

Infer. 7. If breath be the tie betwixt soul and body, *How are we concerned to improve, and draw forth the precious breath of ministers and Christians, whilst it is yet in their nostrils?*

The breath of many ministers is judiciously stopt already, their breath serves to little other use than to preserve their own lives; it will be stopt ere long by death, and then those excellent treasures of gifts and graces, wherewith they are richly furnished, will be gone out of your reach, never to be further useful to your souls. You should do by them therefore (as one aptly speaks) as scholars do by some choice book they have borrowed, and must return in a few days to the owner: They diligently read it night and day, and carefully transcribe the most useful and excellent notes they can find in it, that they may make them their own, when the book is called out of their hands.

But alas! we rather divert, than draw forth these excellencies that are in them. You may yet converse with them, and greatly benefit yourselves by these converses; but (as one speaks) by the stream of your impertinent talk that season is neglected: Afterwards you see your lack of your knowledge, but then the instrument is removed. How must it gall an awakened Jew, to think what discourse he had with Jesus Christ! *Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar? Why do not thy disciples fast?* Oh! had I nothing else to enquire of the Lord Jesus? Would it not have been more pertinent to have asked, What shall I do to be saved? But he is gone, and I dead in my sins. How many persons have we sent away, that had a word of wisdom in their hearts, having only learnt from them what a clock it is, what weather, or what news; forgetting to ask our own hearts, what is all this to us? and to enquire of them things worthy

* Mr. West.

of their wiſdom and experience. "Wherefore is there a price "in the hand of a fool, ſeeing he hath no heart to it?" Prov. xvii. 16. The expence of one minute's breath in ſeaſon, may, if God concur with it, be to you the ground of breathing forth praiſes to God to all eternity.

Infer. 8. Are ſouls and bodies tacked together by ſo frail a thing as a puff of breath? *How vain and groundleſs then are all thoſe pleaſures men take in their carnal projects and deſigns in this world?*

We lay the plot and deſign of our future earthly felicity in our own thoughts; we mould and contrive a deſign for a long and pleaſant life. The model for raiſing an eſtate is already formed in our thoughts, and we have not patience to defer our pleaſure till the accompliſhment of it, but preſently draw a train of pleaſing conſequents from this *chimera*, and our thoughts can ſtoop to nothing leſs than ſitting down all the remainder of our days in the very lap of delight and pleaſure; forgetting that our breath is all the while in our noſtrils, and may expire the next moment: and if it do, the ſtructure of all our expectations and projects comes to nothing in the ſame moment. "His breath "goeth forth, he returneth to his duſt: And in that very day "his thoughts periſh," Pſal. cxlvi. 4. The whole frame of his thoughts falls inſtantly abroad, by drawing out this one pin, his breath. 'Tis good with all our earthly deſigns to mingle the ſerious thoughts of the dominion of providence, and our own frailty; James iv. 15. "If the Lord will, and we live."

'Tis become a common obſervation, that as ſoon as men have accompliſhed their earthly deſigns, and begin to hug and bleſs themſelves in their own acquiſitions, a ſudden and unexpected period is put to their lives and pleaſures, as you may ſee Luke xii. 19, 20. Dan. iv. 30.

Oh then drive moderately; you will be at the end of all theſe things ſooner than you imagine. We need not victual a ſhip to croſs the channel, as they do that are bound to the Indies. "What is your life? It is even a vapour, which appear-"eth for a little while, and then vaniſheth away," James iv. 14. In one moment the projects of many years are overturned for ever.

Infer. 9. Is it but a puff of breath that holds men in life? *Then build not too much hope and confidence upon any man.*

Build not too high upon ſo feeble a foundation. "Ceaſe ye "from man (ſaith the prophet) whoſe breath is in his noſtrils; "for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Iſa. ii. 22. There are

two things that ſhould deter us from dependance upon any man, *viz.* his falſeneſs and his frailty. Grace in a great meaſure may cure the firſt, but not the laſt. The beſt of men muſt die, as well as the worſt, Rom. viii. 10. 'tis a vanity therefore to rely upon any man. It was the ſaying of a philoſopher when he heard how merchants loſt great eſtates at ſea in a moment, *Non amo felicitatem e funibus pendentem;* I love not that happineſs (ſaith he) which hangs upon a rope. But all the happineſs of many men hangs upon a far weaker thing than a rope, even the periſhing breath of a creature.

Let not parents raiſe their hopes too high, or lean too hard upon their children. Say not of thy child, as Lamech did of Noah, "This ſon ſhall comfort us," Gen. v. 29. The world is full of the lamentings and bitter cries of diſappointed parents. Let not the wife depend too much on her huſband, as if her earthly comforts were ſecured in him againſt all danger. God is often provoked to ſtop our friend's breath, that thereby he may ſtop our way to ſin, 1 Tim. v. 5. The truſt, and dependance of a ſoul, is too weighty to be hang'd upon ſuch a weak, and rotten pin, as the breath of a creature.

Infer. 10. To conclude; if this frail breath be all that differenceth the living from the dead, *then fear not man whoſe breath is in his noſtrils.* There is as little ground for our fear of man, as there is for our truſt in man. As death, in a moment, can make the beſt man uſeleſs, and put him out of a capacity to do us any good; ſo it can in a moment, make the worſt man harmleſs, and put him out of a capacity to do us any injury. Indeed, if the breath of our enemies were in their power, and ours at their mercy, there would be juſt cauſe to tremble at them; but they are neither maſters of their own, or ours. "Who art "thou, that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of a man, that ſhall die?" ſaid God to Jacob, Iſa. li. 12. The breath of the mightieſt is no better ſecured than of the meaneſt, nor never in more danger to be ſtopt than when they breathe out threatnings againſt the upright.

Julian's breath was ſoon ſtopt after he threatned to root out the Galileans. Queen Mary reſigned her breath, at the very time when ſhe had filled the priſons with many of Chriſt's ſheep, and deſigned them for the ſlaughter. Read Iſa. xvii. 12. and ſee what muſhrooms we are afraid of. The beſt way to continue your relations, and friends, to your comfort, is to give God and not them, your dependance; and the beſt way to ſecure yourſelves againſt the rage of enemies, is to give God your *ſeat,*

and not them. And thus much of the nature of the soul, and its tie with the body.

REVEL. vi. 9, 10, 11.

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.

And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

And white robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

HAVING, from the former text, spoken of the nature of the soul, and the tie betwixt it and the body; I shall, from this scripture, evince the *immortality of the soul*, which is a chief part of its excellency and glory; and in this scripture it hath a firm foundation.

This book of the *Revelation* completes and seals up the whole sacred canon, Rev. xxii. 18. It also comprehends all the great and signal events of providence, relating either to the Christian church, or to its antichristian enemies in the several periods of time, to the end of the world; chap. i. 19. All which the Spirit of God discovers to us in the opening of the seven seals, the sounding of the seven trumpets, and the pouring out of the seven vials.

The first *five seals* express the state of the church under the bloody, persecuting, Heathen emperors.

SEAL I.

The first seal opened, ver. 2. gives the church a very encouraging and comfortable prospect of the victories, successes, and triumphs of Christ, notwithstanding the rage, subtlety and power of all its enemies. He shall ride on conquering, and to conquer, and his arrows shall be sharp in the hearts of his enemies, whereby the people shall fall under him. And this chearing prospect was no more than was needful: For,

SEAL II.

The second seal opened, ver. 3, 4. represents the first bloody persecution of the church under Nero, whom Tertullian calls

* *Dedicator damnationis noſtrae:* he that firſt condemned Chriſtians to the ſlaughter. And the perſecution under him is ſet forth by the type of a *red horſe*, and a great ſword in the hand of him that rode thereon. His cruelty is by Paul compared to the *mouth of a lion*, 2 Tim. iv. 17. Paul, Peter, Bartholomew, Barnabas, Mark, are all ſaid to die by his cruel hand; and ſo fierce was his rage againſt the Chriſtians, that at that time, as † Euſebius ſaith, "a man might ſee cities lie full of dead bo-"dies, the old and young, men and women, caſt out naked, "without any reverence of perſons or ſex, in the open ſtreet." And when the day failed, Chriſtians, (ſaith ‡ Tacitus) were burnt in the night, inſtead of torches, to give them light in the ſtreets.

SEAL III.

The third ſeal opened, ver. 5, 6. ſets forth the calamities which ſhould befal the church by famine; yet not ſo much a literal, as a figurative famine, as a grave and learned commentator ‖ expounds it, like that mentioned, Amos viii. 11, 12. which fell out under Maximus and Trajan; the former directing the perſecution, eſpecially againſt miniſters, in which many bright lamps were extinguiſhed; the latter expreſsly condemned all Chriſtian meetings and aſſemblies by a law. The type by which this perſecution was ſet forth, is a *black horſe*. A gloomy and diſmal day it was indeed to the poor ſaints, when they eat the bread of their ſouls, as it were, by weight; for he that ſat on him had a pair of ballances in his hand. Then did John hear this ſad voice, "A meaſure of wheat for a penny, and three "meaſures of barley for a penny." The quantity was but the ordinary allowance to keep a man alive for a day, and a Roman penny was the ordinary wages given for a day's work to a labourer. The meaning is, that, in thoſe days, all the ſpiritual food men ſhould get to keep their ſouls alive from day to day, with all their travel and labour, ſhould be but ſufficient for that end.

SEAL IV.

The fourth ſeal opened, ver. 7, 8. repreſents a much more ſad and doleful ſtate of the church; for under it are found all the former ſufferings, with ſome new kinds of trouble ſuperadded. Under this ſeal, Death rides upon the *pale horſe*, and

* Tertul. Apol. c. 5.

† *Adeo ut videret repletas humanis corporibus civitates, jacentes mortuos, ſimul cum parvulis ſenes, fœminarumque abſque ulla ſexus reverentia, in publico rejecta cadavera.*

‡ Taciti l. xv. Annal. ‖ Durham on the place.

Hell, or the Grave, follows him. It is conceived to point at the persecution under Diocletian, when the church was mowed down as a meadow.

SEAL V.

The fifth seal is opened in my text, under which the Lord Jesus represents to his servant John, the state and condition of those precious souls which had been torn and separated from their bodies, by the bloody hands of tyrants, for his name's sake, under all the former persecutions. The design whereof is, to support and encourage all that were to come after in the same bloody path. *I saw under the altar*, &c. In which we have an account,

1. Of what John saw.
2. Of what he heard.

1. We have an account of what he saw: "I saw the souls of "them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testi-"mony which they held."

Souls, in this place, are not put for the blood, or the dead carcasses of the saints who were slain, as some have groundlesly imagined; but are to be understood properly and strictly, for those * spiritual and immortal substances, which once had a vital union with their bodies, but were now separated from them by a violent death; yet still retained a love and inclination to them, even in the state of separation; and are therefore here brought in complaining of the shedding of their blood, and destruction of their bodies.

These souls (even of all that died for Christ, from Abel to that time) John saw, that is, † *in spirit*; for these immaterial substances are not perceptible by the gross external senses. He had the privilege and favour of a spiritual representation of them, being therein extraordinarily assisted, as Paul was when his soul was wrapt into the third heaven, and heard things unutterable, 2 Cor. xii. 2. God gave him a transient visible representation of those holy souls, and that *under the altar*: he means not any material *altar*, as that at *Jerusalem* was; but as the holy place figured heaven, so the *altar* figured Jesus Christ, Heb. xiii. 10. And most aptly Christ is represented to John in this figure, and

* Εἶδον τας ψυχας. i. e. *I saw the souls*; here the word *soul* is taken for the immortal spirit of man, as in Matth. x. 28. in which sense John here says, that he saw the souls, &c. *Marlorat on the place.*

† Souls divested of bodies are invisible to corporeal eyes; therefore John saw them in the Spirit. *Pareus on the place.*

souls of the martyrs at the foot or basis of this altar; thereby to inform us,

(1.) That however men look upon the death of those persons, and though they kill their names by slanders, as well as their persons by the sword; yet, in God's account, they die as sacrifices, and their blood is no other than a drink-offering poured out to God, which he highly prizeth, and graciously accepteth. Suitable whereunto Paul's expression is, Phil. ii. 17.

(2.) That the value and acceptation their death and bloodshed hath with God, is through Christ, and upon his account; for it is the altar which sanctifieth the gift, Mat. xxiii. 19 And,

(3.) It informs us, that these holy souls, now in a state of separation from their bodies, were very near to Jesus Christ in heaven. They lay, as it were, at his foot.

Once more, they are here described to us by the cause of their sufferings and death in this world; and that was, "for the word "of God, and for the testimony which they held;" *i. e.* They died in defence of the truths, or will of God revealed in his word, against the corruptions, oppositions, and innovations of men. As one of the martyrs, that held up the Bible at the stake, said, This is it that hath brought me hither. They died not as malefactors, but as witnesses. They gave a threefold testimony to the truth; a lip-testimony, a life-testimony, and a blood-testimony; whilst the hypocrite gives but one, and many Christians but two. Thus we have an account of what John saw.

2. Next he tells us what he heard; and that was,

(1.) A vehement cry from those souls to God.

(2.) A gracious answer from God to them.

(1.) The cry which they uttered with a loud voice was this, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our "blood on them that dwell on the earth?" A cry like that from the blood of Abel. Yet let it be remembred,

1. This cry doth not imply these holy souls to be in a restless state, or to want true satisfaction and repose out of the body; nor yet,

2. That they carried with them to heaven any malevolent or revengeful disposition: that which is principally signified by this cry, is their vehement desire after the abolition of the kingdom of Satan, and the completion and consummation of Christ's kingdom in this world; that those his enemies, which oppose his kingdom, by slaying his saints, may be made his footstool: which is the same thing Christ waits for in glory, Heb. x. 13.

(2.) Here we find God's gracious answer to the cry of these souls, in which he speaks satisfaction to them two ways:

1. By somewhat given them for present.
2. By somewhat promised them hereafter.

1. That which he gives them in hand; "White robes were "given to every one of them." It is generally agreed, that these white robes given them, denote heavenly glory, the same which is promised to all sincere and faithful ones, who preserve themselves pure from the corruptions, and defilements of the world, Rev iii. 4. And it is as much as if God should have said to them, Although the time be not come to satisfy your desires, in the final ruin and overthrow of Satan's tyrannical kingdom in the world, and Christ's consummate conquest of all his enemies, yet it shall be well with you in the mean time; you shall *walk with me in white, and enjoy your glory in heaven.*

2. And this is not all; but the very things they cry for shall be given them also after a little season; *q. d.* wait but a little while, till the rest that are to follow, in the same suffering path, be got through the red sea of martyrdom, as you are, and then you shall see the foot of Christ upon the necks of all his enemies, and justice shall fully avenge the precious, innocent blood of all the saints, which in all ages hath been shed for my sake; from the blood of Abel, to the last that shall ever suffer for righteousness sake in the world. From all which, this conclusion is most fair and obvious;

Doct. *That the souls of men perish not with their bodies, but do certainly over-live them, and subsist in a state of separation from them.* Mat. x. 28. "Fear not them that kill the "body, but are not able to kill the soul."

The bodies of these martyrs of Jesus were destroyed by divers sorts of torments, but their souls were out of the reach of all those cruel engines; they were in safety under the altar, and in glory, cloathed with their white robes, when their bodies, they lately inhabited on earth, were turned to ashes, and torn to pieces by wild beasts.

The point I am to discourse from this scripture, is the immortality of the soul. For the better understanding whereof, let it be noted that there is a twofold immortality.

I. Simple, and absolute in its own nature.

II. Derived, dependent, and from the pleasure of God.

In the former sense, God only hath immortality, as the apostle speaks, 1 Tim. vi. 16. Our souls have it as a gift from him. He that created our souls out of nothing, can, if he please, reduce them to nothing again; but he hath bestowed immortality upon them, and produced them in a nature suitable to that his appointment, fitted for an everlasting life. So that though

God by his abſolute power can, yet he never will annihilate them, but they ſhall, and muſt live for ever in endleſs bleſſedneſs or miſery; death muſt deſtroy theſe mortal bodies, but it cannot deſtroy our ſouls. And the certainty of this aſſertion is grounded upon theſe reaſons, and will be cleared by theſe following arguments.

Arg. 1. The firſt argument for proof of the ſoul's immortality, may be taken from the ſimplicity, ſpirituality, and uncompoundedneſs of its nature; it is a pure, ſimple, unmixed being. * Death is the diſſolution of things compounded; where therefore no compoſition or mixture is found, no death or diſſolution can follow.

Death is the great divider, but it is of things that are diviſible. The more ſimple, pure, and refined any material thing is, by ſo much the more permanent and durable it is found to be. The nearer it approacheth to the nature of ſpirits, the farther it is removed from the power of death: but that which is not material, or mixed at all, is wholly exempt from the ſtroke and power of death. It is from the contrariant qualities, and jarring humours, in mixed bodies, that they come under the law and power of diſſolution. Matter, and mixture, are the doors at which death enters naturally upon the creatures.

But the ſoul of man is a ſimple, ſpiritual, immaterial, and unmixed being, not compounded of matter and form, as other creatures are, but void of matter, and altogether ſpiritual; as may appear in the vaſt capacity of its underſtanding faculty, which cannot be ſtraitned by receiving multitudes of truths into it. It need not empty itſelf of what it had received before, to make way for more truth; nor doth it find itſelf clogged or burdened by the greateſt multitudes or varieties of truths; but the more it knows, the more it ſtill deſires to know. Its capacity and appetite are found to enlarge themſelves, according to the increaſe of knowledge. So that, to ſpeak, as the matter is, If the knowledge of all arts, ſciences, and myſteries of nature, could be gathered into the mind of one man, yet that mind would thirſt, and even burn with deſire after more knowledge, and find more room for it than it did when it firſt ſipt, and reliſhed the ſweetneſs of truth. Knowledge, as knowledge, never burdens or cloys the mind; but like fire increaſes and enlarges, as it finds more matter to work upon. Now this could never be, if the ſoul were a material being. Take the

* Death is a ſeparation, diſſolving, or tearing aſunder of parts that had been joined by ſome union. *Tullius.*

largest vessel, and you shall find that the more you pour into it, the less room is still left for more; and when it is full, you cannot pour in one drop more, except you let out what was in it before *. But the soul is no such vessel, it can retain all it had, and be still receptive of more; so that nothing can fill it, and satisfy it, but that which is infinite and perfect.

The natural appetite after food is sometimes sharp and eager, but then there is a stint and measure, beyond which it craves not; but the appetite of the mind is more eager and unlimited; it never saith till it come to rest in God, it is enough †, because the faculty which produceth it, is more active, spiritual, and immaterial. All matter has its limits, bounds, and just measures, beyond which it cannot be extended. But the soul is boundless, and its appetitions infinite; it rests not, but in the spiritual and infinite Being, God alone being its adequated object, and able to satisfy its desires; which plainly proves it to be a spiritual, immaterial, and simple being. And being so, two things necessarily follow therefrom.

1. That it is void of any principle of corruption in itself.

2. That it is not liable to any stroke of death, by any adverse power without itself.

1. It cannot be liable to death, from any seeds or principles of corruption within itself; for where there is no composition, there is no dissolution: the spirituality, and simplicity of the soul admits of no corruption.

2. Nor is it liable to death, by any adverse power without itself; no sword can touch it, no instrument of death can reach it: it is above the reach of all adversaries, Matth. x. 28. "Fear not "them that kill the body, but cannot kill the soul." The bounds and limits of creature-power are here fixed by Jesus Christ, beyond which they cannot go. They can wound, torment, and destroy the body, when God permits them: but the soul is out of their reach: a sword can no more hurt or wound it, than it can wound or hurt the light; and consequently it is, and must needs be of an immortal nature.

Object. But there seems to be a decay upon our souls in our old age, and decays argue and imply corruption, and are so many steps and tendencies towards the death and dissolution there-

* *Intus existens prohibet alienum.* i. e. What is already within, refuses access to what is without.

† *Appetitus finis est infinitus.* There is no end of desiring, till we come at the desired end, which is God.

of. The experience of the whole world shews us how the apprehensions, judgments, wit, and memory of old men fail, even to that degree, that they become children again, in respect of the abilities of their minds: their souls only serving, as it were, to salt their bodies, and keep them from putrefaction for a few longer.

Sol. It is a great mistake, there is not the least decay upon the soul, no time makes any change upon the essence of the soul: all the alteration that is made, is upon the organs and instruments of the body, which decay in time, and become inapt and unserviceable to the soul.

The soul, like an expert skilful musician, is as able as ever it was, but the body, its instrument, is out of tune: and the ablest artist can make no pleasing melody upon an instrument whose strings are broken, or so relaxed that they cannot be screwed up to their due height.

Let Hippocrates, the prince of physicians, decide this matter for us. "The soul (saith he) cannot be changed or altered as "to its essence, by the access of meat or drink, or any other "thing whatsoever; but all the alterations that are made, must "be referred either to the spirits with which it mixeth itself, "or to the vessels and organs through which it streameth ‡." So that this proves not its corruptibility, and being neither corruptible in itself nor vulnerable by any creature without itself; nor seeing man cannot, and God will not destroy it, the conclusion is strongly inferred, *That therefore it is immortal.*

ARGUMENT II.

The immortality of the souls of men may be concluded from the promises of everlasting blessedness, and the threatnings of everlasting miseries, respectively made in the scriptures of truth, to the godly and ungodly, after this life; which promises and threatnings had been altogether vain and delusory, if our souls perish with our bodies.

1. God has made many everlasting promises of blessedness, yea, he hath established an everlasting covenant betwixt himself and the souls of the righteous, promising to be their God for ever, and to bestow endless blessedness upon them in the world to come. Such a promise is that, John viii. 28. "I give unto

‡ *Anima nostra quoad essentiam mutari non potest, aut alterari, sive cibi, sive potus, sive cujuscunque rei alterius accessu: referenda est enim omnium alterationum causa, aut ad Spiritus, quibus se immiscet, aut ad vasa, sive organa quæ permeat.* Hippocrat. lib. de diæta.

"them eternal life, and they shall never perish." And John iv. 14. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, "shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall "be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." And again, John xi. 26. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in "me, shall never die." And once more, Rom. ii. 7. "To "them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory "and honour, and immortality, eternal life;" with multitudes more of like nature.

Now if these be no vain and delusory promises, (as to be sure they are not, being the words of the true and faithful God) then those souls to whom they are made, must live for ever: for if the subject of the promises fail, consequently the performance of the promises must fail too. For how shall they be made good, when those to whom they are made, are perished?

Let it not be objected here, That the bodies of believers are concerned in the promises as well as their souls, and yet their bodies perish notwithstanding.

For we say, though their bodies die, yet they shall live again, and enjoy the fruit of the promises in eternal glory; and whilst their bodies lie in the grave, their souls are with God, enjoying the covenanted blessedness in heaven, Rom. viii. 10, 11. and so the covenant-bond is not loosed betwixt them and God, by death, which it must needs be, in case the soul perish when the body doth. And upon this hypothesis, that argument of Christ is built, Matth. xxii. 32. proving the resurrection from the covenant God made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; "I am the "God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Ja-"cob: God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," *q. d.* If Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, be perished in soul as well as in body, how then is God their God; what is become of the promise and covenant-relation? for if one correlate fail, the relation necessarily fails with it. If God be their God, then certainly they are in being; "for God is not the God of the dead," *i. e.* of those that are utterly perished. Therefore it must needs be, that though their bodies be naturally dead, yet their souls still live; and their bodies must live again at the resurrection by virtue of the same promise.

On the contrary, many threatnings of eternal misery, after this life, are found in the scriptures of truth, against ungodly and wicked persons. Such is that in 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9. "The "Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, to "render vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey

" not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished " with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, " and the glory of his power." And speaking of the torments of the damned, Christ thus expresseth the misery of such wretched souls in hell, Mark ix. 44. " Where their worm dieth not, and " the fire is not quenched." But how shall the wicked be punished with everlasting destruction, if their souls have not an everlasting duration? or how can it be said, *Their worm (viz.* the remorse and anguish of their conscience) *dieth not*, if their souls die? Punishment can endure no longer than its subject endureth. If the being of the soul cease, its pains and punishments must have an end.

You see then, there are everlasting promises, and threatenings to be fulfilled, both upon the godly and ungodly, " He that " believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life, and he that believ- " eth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abid- " eth on him," John iii. 36. The believer shall never see spiritual death, *viz.* the separation of his soul from God; and the unbeliever shall never see life, *viz.* the blessed fruition of God; but the wrath of God shall abide on him. If wrath must abide on him, he must abide also as the wretched subject thereof, which is another argument of the immortality of souls.

ARGUMENT III.

The immortality of the soul is a truth asserted and attested by the universal consent of all nations and ages of the world. " We give much (said ‖ Seneca) to the presumption of all men," and that justly; for it would be hard to think that an error should obtain the general consent of mankind, or that God would suffer all the world, in all ages of it, to bow down under an universal deception.

This doctrine sticks close to the nature of man; it springs up easily, and without force from his conscience. It hath been allowed as an unquestionable thing, not only among Christians, who have the oracles of God to teach and confirm this doctrine, but among Heathens also, who had no other light, but that of nature, to guide them into the knowledge and belief of it. Learned Zanchius * cites out of Cicero an excellent passage to

‖ *Multum dare solemus præsumptioni omnium hominum: cum de animæ æternitate disserimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum aut timentium inferos, aut colentium.* Senec. Ep. 17.

* *In omni re consensio omnium gentium lex naturæ putanda est: eoque instar millæ demonstrationum calis consensio apud bonos esse debet.* Zanchius de immortalitate animarum, p. 644.

this purpose. "*In every thing*, saith he, *the consent of all na-* "*tions is to be accounted the law of nature;* and therefore, "with all good men, it should be instead of a thousand demon- "strations; and to resist it, (as he there adds), what is it, but "to resist the voice of God?" and how much more, when, with his consent, the word of God doth also consent? As for the consent of nations, in this point, the learned author last mentioned, hath industriously gathered many great and famous testimonies from the ancient Chaldeans, Grecians, Pythagoreans, Stoics, Platonists, *&c.* which evidently shew they made no doubt of the immortality of their souls. How plain is that of Phocylides? ψυχη δε αθανατος και αγηρος ζη δια παντος. Speaking of the soul, in opposition to the body, which must be resolved into dust, he saith, "But for the soul, that is immortal, and "never grows old, but lives for ever." And Trismegistus, the famous and celebrated philosopher †, gives this account of man, "That he consists of two parts, being mortal in respect of his "body, but immortal in respect of his soul, which is his best "and principal part." Plato ‡ not only asserts the immortality of the souls of men, but disputes for it; and, among other arguments, he urges this: "That if it were not so, "wicked men would certainly have the advantage of righteous "and good men, who, after they have committed all manner "of evils, should suffer none." But what speak I of philosophers? the most barbarous nations in the world constantly believe it ‖. The Turks acknowledge it in their Alcoran; and though they grosly mistake the nature of heaven, in fancying it to be a paradise of sensual pleasures, as well as the way thither, by their impostor Mahomet; yet it is plain they believe the soul's immortality, and that it lives in pain or pleasure after this life.

The very savage and illiterate Indians are so fully perswaded of the soul's immortality, that wives cast themselves chearfully

† Ανθρωπος διπλους, δια το σωμα θνητος, αθανατος δ' δια ψυχην, τον γενικον ανθρωπον.

‡ Ει μεν γαρ, &c. *Si enim mors dissolutio esset utriusque (corporis sc. et animæ) lucrum foret malis cum moriuntur.* Plato in Epist.

‖ Why do I speak of the Turks, Tartars, Muscovites, Indians, Persians, and all other nations which are at this day barbarous? None is so barbarous and wicked, but he is convinced, that, after death, there are places in which souls are either punished for their bad actions, or rewarded and blest with delights for their good actions. *Zanch.*

into the flames to attend the souls of their husbands; and subjects, to attend the souls of their kings into the other world.

Two things are objected against this argument.

1. That some particular persons have denied this doctrine, as Epicurus, *&c.* and by argument maintained the contrary.

To which I answer, That though they have done so, yet, (1.) This no way shakes the argument from the consent of nations, because some few persons have denied it: we truly say, the earth is spherical, though there be many hills and risings in it. If Democritus put out his own eyes, must we therefore say all the world is blind?

(2.) It is worth thinking on, whether they that have questioned the immortality of the soul, have not rather made it the matter of their option and desire, than of their faith and persuasion. We distinguish Atheists into three classes, such as are so in *practice*, in *desire*, or in *judgment*; but of the former sorts there may be found multitudes, to one that is so in his settled judgment. If you think it strange that any man should wish his soul to be mortal, Hierocles * gives us the true reason of it: "A wicked man (saith he) is afraid of his Judge; and therefore wishes his soul and body may perish together by death, rather than that it should come to God's tribunal."

Object. 2. Nor can the strength of the argument be eluded by saying, "All this may be but an universal tradition," one nation receiving it from another.

Sol. For as this is neither true in itself, nor possible to be made good, so if it were, it would not invalidate the argument: for if it were not a truth agreeable to the light of nature, and so easily received by all men upon the proposal of it, it were impossible that all the nations in the world should embrace it so readily, and hold it so tenaciously as they do.

ARGUMENT IV.

The immortality of the soul may be evinced from the everlasting habits which are subjected, and inherent in it. If these habits abide for ever, certainly so must the souls in which they are planted.

The souls of good men are the good ground, in which the seed of grace is sown by the Spirit, Mat. xiii. 23. *i. e.* the subjects in which gracious properties and affections do inhere and dwell, (which is the formal notion of a substance) and these implanted graces are everlasting things. So John iv. 14. "It shall

* Ο κακος αθανατον ειναι την αυτου ψυχην θελει, μη υπομενων τιμωρησασθαι και φθαρτον εκει διαγειν. *Hieroc.*

"be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life," *i. e.* the graces of the Spirit shall be in believers, permanent habits, fixed principles, which shall never decay. And therefore that seed of grace, which is cast into their souls at their regeneration, is in 1 Pet. i. 23. called "incorruptible seed, which liv-"eth and abideth for ever:" and it is incorruptible, not only considered abstractly, in its own simple nature, but concretely, as it is in the sanctified soul, its subject: for it is said, 1 John iii. 9. "The seed of God remaineth in him." It abideth for ever in the soul. If then these two things be clear to us, *viz.*

1. That the habits of grace be everlasting;
2. That they are inseparable from sanctified souls;

It must needs follow, That the soul, their subject, is so too; an everlasting and immortal soul. And how plainly do both these propositions lie before us in the scriptures? As for the immortal and indeterminable nature of saving grace, it is plain to him that considers, not only what the fore-cited scriptures speak about it, calling it *incorruptible seed, a well of water springing up into everlasting life;* but add to these, what is said of these divine qualities, in 2 Pet. i. 4. where they are called the *divine nature;* and Eph. iv. 18. *the life of God*, noting the perpetuity of these principles in believers, as well as their resemblance of God in holiness, who are endowed with them.

I know it is a great question among divines, *An gratia in renatis sit natura et essentia sua interminabilis?* Whether these principles of grace in the regenerate, be everlasting and interminable, in their own nature and essence? For my own part, I think that God only is naturally, essentially, and absolutely interminable and immortal. But these gracious habits, planted by him in the soul, are so by virtue of God's appointment, promise, and covenant. And sure it is, that by reason hereof they are interminate, which is enough for my purpose, if they be not essentially interminable. Though grace be but a creature, and therefore hath a *posse mori*, yet it is a creature begotten by the Word, and Spirit of God, which live and abide for ever, and a creature within the promise and covenant of God, by reason whereof it can never actually die.

And then as for the inseparableness of these graces from the souls in whom they are planted, how clear is this from John ii. 27. where sanctifying grace is compared to an unction, and this unction is said to abide in them? And 1 John iii. 9. it is called the seed of God, which remaineth in the soul. All our natural and moral excellencies and endowments go away when we die; Job iv. 21. "Doth not their excellency that is in them

"go away?" Men may outlive their acquired gifts, but not their supernatural graces. These stick by the soul, as Ruth to Naomi, and where it goes they go too: so that when the soul is dislodged by death, all its graces ascend up with it into glory; it carries away all its faith, love, delight in God, all its comfortable experiences, and fruits of communion with God, along with it to heaven. For death is so far from divesting the soul of its graces, that it perfects in a moment all that was defective in them; 1 Cor. xiii. 10. "When that which is perfect shall "come, then that which is in part shall be done away," as the twilight is done away when the sun is up, and at its zenith. So then, grace never dieth, and this never-dying grace is inseparable from its subject; by which it is plain to him that considers, that as graces, so souls abide for ever.

Object. But this only proves the immortality of regenerate souls.

Sol. It doth so. But then consider, as there be gracious habits in the regenerate that never die, so there are vicious habits in the unregenerate that can never be separated from them in the world to come. Hence John viii. 24. they are said to "die "in their sins;" and Job xx. 11. "Their iniquities lie down "with them in the dust;" and Ezek. xxiv. 13. "They shall "never be purged." Remarkable is that place, Rev. xxii. 11. "Let him that is filthy, be filthy still." And if guilt sticks so fast, and sin be so deeply engraven in impenitent souls, they also must remain for ever, to bear the punishment of them.

ARGUMENT V.

The immortality of the soul of man may be evinced from the dignity of man above all other creatures, (angels only excepted) and his dominion over them all.

In this, the scriptures are clear, that man is the master-piece of all God's other works; Psal. viii. 5, 6. "For thou hast made "him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with "glory and honour. Thou hast made him to have dominion "over the works of thy hand, thou hast put all things under "his feet." Other creatures were made for his service, and he is crowned king over them all. One man is of more worth than all the inferior creatures.

But wherein is his dignity and excellency above all other creatures, if not in respect of the capacity and immortality of his soul? Sure it can be found no where else; for as to the body, many of the creatures excel man in the perfections of sense, greatness of strength, agility of members, *&c.*

Nos aper auditu praecellit, aranea tactu,
Vultur odoratu, lynx visu, simia gustu.

And for beauty, *Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of the lilies of the field.* The beaſts and fowls enjoy more pleaſure, and live diveſted of all thoſe cares and cumbers which perplex and wear out the lives of men. It cannot be, in reſpect of bodily perfections or pleaſures, that man excels other creatures.

If you ſay, He excels them all in reſpect of that noble endowment of reaſon, which is peculiar to man, and his ſingular excellency above them all.

It is true, this is his glory: but if you deprive the reaſonable ſoul of immortality, you deſpoil it of all, both of its glory and comfort, and put the reaſonable into a worſe condition than the unreaſonable and brutiſh creatures. For if the ſoul may die with the body, and man periſh as the beaſt, happier is the life of the beaſt, which is perplexed with no cares nor fears about futurities; our reaſon ſerves to little other purpoſe but to be an engine of torture, a mere rack to our ſouls.

Certainly, the privilege of man doth not conſiſt in reaſon, as abſtracted from immortality. But in this it properly conſiſts, that he enjoys not only a reaſonable, but alſo rejoiceth in an immortal ſoul, which ſhall overlive the world, and ſubſiſt ſeparate from the body, and abide for ever, when all other ſouls, being but a material form, periſh with that matter on which they depend. This is the proper dignity of man, above the beaſt that periſheth; and to deprive him of immortality, and leave him his reaſon, is but to leave him a more miſerable and wretched creature than any that God hath put under his feet. For man is a proſpecting creature, and raiſeth up to himſelf vaſt hopes and fears from the world to come: by theſe he is reſtrained from the ſenſual pleaſures, which other creatures freely enjoy, and exerciſed with ten thouſand cares, which they are unacquainted with; and to fail at laſt of all his hopes and expectations of happineſs, in the world to come, is to fall many degrees lower than the loweſt creature ſhall fall; even ſo much lower as his expectations and hopes had lifted him higher.

ARGUMENT VI.

The ſouls of men muſt be immortal, or elſe the deſires of immortality are planted in their ſouls in vain.

That there are deſires of immortality found in the hearts of all men, is a truth too evident to be denied or doubted *. Man

* I beſeech men, for God's ſake, that if at any time there ariſe in them a deſire, or a wiſh that others ſhould ſpeak well of them rather

cannot bound and terminate his desires within the narrow limits of this world, and the time that measures it. Nothing that can be measured by time is commensurate to the desires of man's soul. No motto better suits it than this, *Non est mortale quod opto;* I seek for that which will not die, Rom. ii. 7. And his great relief against death lies in this, *Non omnis moriar*; That he shall not totally perish. Yea, we find in all men, even in those that seem to be most drowned, and lost in the love and delights of this present world, a natural desire to continue their names and memories to posterity after death. Hence it is said, Psal. xlix. 11. "Their inward thought is, that their houses shall "continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; "they call their lands after their own names."

And hence is the desire of children, which is, as one saith, *nodosa aeternitas*, a knotty eternity; when our threed is spun out and cut off, their threed is knit to it; and so we dream of a continued succession in our name and family.

Absalom had no children to continue his memory; to supply which defect, he reared up a pillar, 2 Sam. xviii. 18. Now it cannot be imagined that God should plant the desire of immortality in those souls, that are incapable of it; not yet can we give a rational account how these apprehensions of immortality should come into the souls of men, except they themselves be of an immortal nature. For, either these notions and apprehensions of immortality are impressed upon our souls by God, or do naturally spring out of the souls of men: If God impress them, those impressions are made in vain, if there be no such thing as immortality to be enjoyed; and if they spring and rise naturally out of our souls, that is a sufficient evidence of their immortality. For we can no more conceive, and form to ourselves, ideas and notions of immortality, if our souls be mortal, than the brutes which are void of reason, can form to themselves notions and conceptions of rationality. So then the very apprehensions and desires that are found in mens hearts of immortality, do plainly speak them to be of an immortal nature *.

than evil after their death, then at that time they would seriously consider whether these motions are not from some spirit, to continue a spirit after it leaves its earthly habitation, rather than from an earthly spirit, a vapour, which cannot act, or imagine, or desire, or fear things beyond its continuance. *Hale de anima, p.* 72.

* It forms conceptions of things spiritual and abstract from matter, and discerns objects which have no dimensions, figure, colour, or affection of matter. If the soul itself is the fountain or idea of

of

ARGUMENT VII.

Moreover, the account given us in ſcripture of the return of ſeveral ſouls into their own bodies again after death, and real ſeparation from them, ſhews us that the ſoul ſubſiſts, and lives in a ſeparate ſtate after death, and periſheth not by the ſtroke of death: For if it were annihilated or deſtroyed by death, the ſame ſoul could never be reſtored again to the ſame body. A dead body may indeed be acted by an aſſiſting form, which may move and carry it from place to place: So the devil hath acted the dead bodies of many; but they cannot be ſaid to live again by their own ſouls, after a real ſeparation by death, unleſs thoſe ſouls overlived the bodies they forſook at death, and had their abode in another place and ſtate. You have divers unqueſtionable examples of the ſouls return into the body, recorded in ſcripture: As that of the Shunamite's ſon, 2 Kings iv. 18, 19, 20, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37. That of the ruler's daughter, Mat. ix. 18, 23, 24, 25. That of the widows ſon, Luke vii. 12, 13, 14, 15. And that of Lazarus, John xi. 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45. "Theſe are no other † but the "very ſame ſouls, their own ſouls which returned to them a-"gain; which, as Chryſoſtom well obſerves, is a great proof "of their immortality, againſt them that think the ſoul is anni-"hilated after the death of the body."

It is true, the ſcripture gives us no account of any ſenſe, or apprehenſion they retained after their re-union of the place or ſtate they were in, during their ſeparation. There ſeemed to be a perfect ἀμνησία, forgetfulneſs of all that they ſaw or felt in the ſtate of ſeparation. And indeed it was neceſſary it ſhould be ſo, that our faith might be built rather upon the ſure promiſes of God, than ſuch reports and narratives of them that came to us from the dead, Luke xvi. 31. And if we believe not the word, neither would we believe *if one came from the dead.*

ARGUMENT VIII.

Moreover, *Eighthly*, The ſuppoſition of the ſoul's periſhing with the body, is ſubverſive of the Chriſtian religion in the principal doctrines and duties thereof: take away the immortality of

immortality, it muſt be immortal; becauſe what is momentary, cannot form an idea of an immortal nature, for the ſoul which is void of reaſon cannot form a conception of rationality. *Stern on death*, p. 198.

† *Non aliam, ſed ipſam priorem animam corpori mortuo reſtitutam eſſe, contra eos qui putaverunt et hodie putant animam poſt mortem corporis nihil eſſe.*

the soul, and all religion falls to the ground. I will instance in,

1. The doctrines
2. The duties

} of religion.

First, It overthrows the main principles and doctrines of the Christian religion, upon which both our faith and comfort is founded; and consequently, it undoes, and ruins us, as to all solid hope and true joy. The doctrines or principles it overthrows, are, among many other, such as follow.

1. It nullifies and makes void the great design and end of God's eternal election. The scriptures tells us, That from all eternity God hath chosen a certain number in Christ Jesus, to eternal life, and to the means by which they shall attain it, out of his mere good pleasure, and for the praise of his grace. This was (1.) an eternal act of God, Eph. i. 4. long before we had our being, Rom. ix. 11. (2.) This choice of God, or his purpose to save some, is immutable, 2 Tim. ii. 19. James i. 17. (3.) This choice he made in Christ, Eph. i. 4. Not that Christ is the cause of God's chusing us: For we were not elected because we were, but that we might be in Christ. Christ was ordained to be the *Medium* of the execution of this decree. And all the mercies which were purposed, and ordained for us, were to be purchased by the blood of Christ. He was not the *cause* of the decree, but the purchaser of the mercies decreed for us. (4.) This choice was of a certain number of persons, who are all known to God, 2 Tim. ii. 19. and all given to Christ in the covenant of redemption, John xvii. 2, 6. So that no elect person can be a reprobate, no reprobate an elect person. (5.) This number was chosen to salvation, 1 Thes. v. 9. No less did God design for them than glory and happiness, and that for ever. (6.) The same persons that are appointed to salvation as the end, are also appointed to sanctification as the way and means by which they shall attain that end, 1 Pet. i. 1, 2. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. (7.) The impulsive cause of this choice was the mere good pleasure of his will, 2 Tim. i. 9. Rom. ix. 15, 16. Eph. i. 9. (8.) The end of all this is, the praise of his glorious grace, Eph. i. 5, 6. to make a glorious manifestation of the riches of his grace for ever. This is the account the scripture gives us of God's eternal choice.

But if our souls be mortal, and perish with our bodies, all this is a mistake, and we are imposed upon, and our understandings are abused by this doctrine: For to what purpose are all these decrees and contrivances of God from everlasting, if our souls perish with our bodies? Certainly, if it be so, he loses all the

thoughts and counſels of his heart about us; and that counſel of his will, which is ſo much celebrated in the ſcriptures, and admired by his people, comes to nought. For this is evident to every man's conſideration, that if the ſoul (which is the object about which all thoſe counſels and thoughts of God were employed and laid out) fail in its being, all thoſe thoughts and counſels that have been employed about it, and ſpent on it, muſt neceſſarily fail and come to nothing with it. The thoughts of his heart cannot ſtand faſt, as it is ſaid, Pſal. xxxiii. 11. if the ſoul ſlide, about which they are converſant. In that day the elect ſoul periſheth, the eternal conſultations and purpoſes of God's heart periſh with it. Keckerman tells us, that "* Albertus Magnus, with abundance of art, and the ſtudy of thirty "years, made a vocal ſtatue in the form of a man. It was a rare "contrivance, and much admired; the cunning Artiſt had ſo "framed it, that by wheels and other *machines* placed within it, "it could pronounce words articularly." Aquinas being ſurprized to hear the ſtatue ſpeak, was affrighted at it, and brake it all to pieces; upon which Albertus told him he had at one blow deſtroyed the work of thirty years. Such a blow would the death of the ſoul give to the counſels and thoughts, not of man, but of God, not of thirty years, but from everlaſting.

If the ſouls of men periſh at death, either God never did appoint any ſouls to ſalvation, as the ſcriptures teſtify he did, 1 Theſ. v. 9. or elſe the foundation of God ſtands not ſure, as his word tells us it doth, 2 Tim. ii. 19. So then this ſuppoſition overturns the eternal decrees and counſels of God, which is the firſt thing.

2. It overthrows the covenant of redemption betwixt the Father and the Son, before this world was made. There was a federal tranſaction betwixt the Father and the Son from eternity, about our ſalvation, 2 Tim. i. 9. Zech. vi. 13. In that covenant Chriſt engaged to redeem the elect by his blood; and the Father promiſed him a reward of thoſe his ſufferings, Iſa. liii. 12. Accordingly he hath poured out his ſoul to death for them, finiſhed the work, John xvii. 4. and is now in heaven, expecting the full reward and fruits of his ſufferings, which conſiſt not in his own perſonal glory, which he there enjoys, but in the completeneſs and fulneſs of his myſtical body, John xvii. 24.

* *Albertus Magnus ſtatuam hominis conſtruxit, quæ cum libramentis quibuſdam, rotis atque aliis machinis intra latentibus peritiſſime compoſitis, linguam quadam ratione et diſciplina moventibus, articulata verba pronunciaret.*

But certainly, if our ſouls periſh with our bodies, Chriſt would be greatly diſappointed: Nor can that promiſe be ever made good to him; Iſa. liii. 11. "He ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul and "be ſatisfied." He hath done his work, but where is his reward? See how this ſuppoſition ſtrikes at the juſtice of God, and wounds his faithfulneſs in his covenant with his Son. He hath as much comfort and reward from the travail of his ſoul, as a mother that is delivered after many ſharp pangs of a child that dies almoſt as ſoon born.

3. It overthrows the doctrines of *Chriſt's incarnation, death, reſurrection, aſcenſion*, and *interceſſion* in heaven for us. And theſe are the main pillars both of our faith and comfort. Take away theſe, and take away our lives too, for theſe are the ſprings of all joy and comfort to the people of God, Rom. viii. 34.

His *incarnation* was neceſſary to capacitate him for his mediatorial work: It was not only a part of it, but ſuch a part, without which he could diſcharge no other part of it. This was the wonder of men and angels, 1 Tim. iii. 16. A God incarnate is the world's wonder; no condeſcenſion like this, Phil. ii. 6, 7.

The *death* of Chriſt hath the nature and reſpect of a ranſom, or equivalent price laid down to the juſtice of God for our redemption, Matth. xx. 28. Acts xx. 28. It brought our ſouls from under the curſe, and purchaſed for them everlaſting bleſſedneſs, Gal. iv. 4, 5.

The *reſurrection* of Chriſt from the dead hath the nature both of a teſtimony of his finiſhing the work of our redemption, and the Father's full ſatisfaction therein, John vi. 10. and of a principle of our reſurrection to eternal life, 1 Cor. xv. 20.

The *aſcenſion* of Chriſt into heaven was in the capacity and relation of a fore-runner, Heb. vi. 20. it was to prepare places for the redeemed, who were to come after him to glory in their ſeveral generations, John xiv. 2, 3.

The *interceſſion* of Chriſt in heaven, is for the ſecurity of our purchaſed inheritance to us, and to prevent any new breaches which might be made by our ſins, whereby it might be forfeited, and we diveſted of it again, 1 John ii. 1, 2.

All theſe jointly make up the foundation of our faith, and hope of glory: But if our ſouls periſh, or be annihilated at death, our faith, hope, and comforts, are all deluſions, vain dreams, which do but amuſe our fond imaginations. For,

(1.) It was not worth ſo great a ſtoop and abaſement of the bleſſed God, as he ſubmited to in his incarnation, when he

appeared in flesh, yea, in the likeness of sinful flesh, Rom. viii. 3. and made himself of no reputation, Phil. ii. 7. An act that is, and ever will be admired by men and angels: I say, it was not worth so great a miracle as this, to procure for us the vanishing comfort of a few years, and that short-lived comfort no other than a deluding dream, or mocking phantasm: For seeing it consists in hope and expectation from the world to come, as the scriptures every where speak, 1 Thes. v. 8. and 2 Cor. iii. 12. Rom. v. 3, 4, 5. if there be nó such enjoyments for us there (as most certainly there are not, if our souls perish) it is but a vanity, a thing of nought, that was the errand upon which the Son of God came from the Father's bosom, to procure for us.

(2.) And for what, think you, was the blood of God upon the cross? What was so vast and inconceivable a treasure expended to purchase? What! the flattering and vain hopes of a few years, of which we may say, as it was said of the Roman consulship, *unius anni volaticum gaudium*; the fugitive joy of a year: Yea, not only short-lived and vain hopes in themselves, but such for the sake whereof we abridge ourselves of the pleasures and desires of the flesh, 1 John iii. 3. and submit ourselves to the greatest sufferings in the world, Rom. viii. 18. For the hope of Israel am I bound with this chain, *&c.* Acts xxviii. 20. Was this the purchase of his blood? Was this it for which he sweat, and groaned, and bled, and died? Was that precious blood no more worth than such a trifle as this?

(3.) To what purpose did Christ rise again from the dead? Was it not to be the *first-fruits of them that sleep?* Did he not rise as the common head of believers, to give us assurance we shall not perish, and be utterly lost in the grave? Col. i. 18. But if our souls perish at death, there can be no resurrection; and if none, then Christ died and rose in vain, *we are yet in our sins*, and all those absurdities are unavoidable, with which the apostle loads this supposition, 1 Cor. xv. 13, *&c.*

(4.) And to as little purpose was his triumphant ascension into heaven, if we can have no benefit by it. The professed end of his ascension was "to prepare a place for us," John xiv. 2. But to what purpose are those mansions in the heavens prepared, if the inhabitants for whom they are prepared be utterly lost? And why is he called the *forerunner*, if there be none to follow him? as surely there are not, if our souls perish with our bodies. Those heavenly mansions, that city prepared by God, must stand void for ever if this be so.

(5.) To conclude; in vain is the intercession of Christ in

heaven for us, if this be ſo. They that ſhall never come thither, have no buſineſs there to be tranſacted by their advocate for them. So that the whole *doctrine of redemption by Chriſt* is utterly ſubverted by this one ſuppoſition.

4. As it ſubverts the *doctrine of redemption by Chriſt*, and all the hopes and comforts we build thereon, ſo it utterly deſtroys all the works of the ſpirit, upon the hearts of believers, and makes them vaniſh into nothing.

There are divers acts and offices of the Spirit of God about, and upon our ſouls; I will only ſingle out three, *viz.* his *ſanctifying*, *ſealing*, and *comforting work*: all things of great weight with believers.

(1.) His *ſanctifying work*, whereby he alters the frames and tempers of our ſouls, 2 Cor. v. 17. "Old things are paſſed away, "behold all things are become new."

The declared and direct end of this work of the Spirit upon our ſouls, is to attemper and diſpoſe them for heaven, Col. i. 12. For ſeeing "nothing that is unclean can enter into the holy place," Rev. xxi. 27. "and without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord," Heb. xii. 14. it is neceſſary that all thoſe that have this hope in them, ſhould expect to be partakers of their hopes in the way of purification, 1 John iii. 3. And this is the ground upon which the people of God do mortify their luſts, and take ſo much pains with their own hearts, Mat. xviii. 8. counting it better (as their Lord tells them) "to enter into life halt or maimed, than having "two eyes or hands to be caſt into hell." But to what purpoſe is all this ſelf-denial, all theſe heart-ſearchings, heart-humblings, cries, and tears, upon the account of ſin, and for an heart ſuited to the will of God, if there be no ſuch life to be enjoyed *with God, after this animal life is finiſhed?*

Object. If you ſay there is a preſent advantage reſulting to us in this world, from our abſtinence and ſelf-denial; we have the truer and longer enjoyment of our comforts on earth by it: debauchery and licentiouſneſs do not only flat the appetite, and debaſe and alloy the comforts of this world, but cut ſhort our lives by the exorbitances and abuſes of them.

Solut. Though there be a truth in this worth our noting, yet (1.) morality could have done all this without ſanctification; there was no need for the pouring out of the ſpirit, for ſo low an uſe and purpoſe as this. (2.) And therefore as the wiſdom of God would be cenſured and impeached, in ſending his Spirit for an end which could as well be attained without it; ſo the veracity of God muſt needs be affronted by it, who, as you heard

before, hath declared our ſalvation to be the end of our ſanctification.

(2.) His *ſealing*, *witneſſing*, and *aſſuring* work. We have a full account in the ſcriptures, of theſe offices and works of the ſpirit, and ſome ſpiritual ſenſe and feeling of them upon our own hearts, which are too good aſſurances that there are ſuch things as his bearing witneſs with our ſpirit, Rom. viii. 16. "his ſealing us to the day of redemption," Eph. iv. 30. "his "earneſts given into our hearts," 2 Cor. i. 22. All which acts, and works of the ſpirit have a direct and clear aſpect upon the life to come, and the happineſs of our ſouls in the full enjoyment of God to eternity; for it is to that life we are now ſealed; and of the full ſum of that glory, that theſe are the pledges and earneſts. But if our ſouls periſh by death, theſe witneſſes of the ſpirit are deluſions, and his earneſts are given us but in jeſt.

(3.) His *comforting work* is a ſweet fruit and effect ſenſibly felt and taſted by believers in this world. He is from this office ſtiled the *Comforter*, John xvi. 7. *ſignatur, et eminenter:* He ſo comforts, as none other doth, or can. And what is the matter of his comforts, but the bleſſedneſs to come, the joys of the coming world? John xvi. 13. "Eye hath not ſeen," *&c.*

Upon the account of theſe unſeen things, he enableth believers to glory in tribulation, Rom. v. 4, to deſpiſe preſent things, whether the ſmiles or the frowns of the world, Heb. xi. 24. and ver. 26. But if the being of our ſouls fail at death, theſe are but the fantaſtic joys of men in a dream, and the experiences of all God's people are found but ſo many fond conceits, and groſs miſtakes.

5. This ſuppoſition overthrows the doctrine of the reſurrection, which is the conſolation of Chriſtians. We believe, according to the ſcripture, that after death hath divorced our ſouls and bodies for a time, they ſhall meet again, and be re-united, and that the joy at their re-union will be to all that are in Chriſt, greater than the ſorrows they felt at parting. This ſeems not incredible to us, whatever natural improbabilities and carnal reaſons may be againſt it, Acts xxvi. 8. and that becauſe the almighty power, which is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf, undertakes this taſk, Phil. iii. 21.

We believe this very ſame numerical body ſhall riſe again, Job xxi. 27. by the return of the ſame ſoul into it, which now dwelleth in it; and that we ſhall be the ſame perſons that now we are: the remunerative juſtice of God requiring it to be ſo.

We believe the ſouls of the righteous ſhall be much better accommodated, and have a more comfortable habitation in their bodies than now they have, 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43. ſeeing they ſhall be made like unto Chriſt's glorious body, Phil. iii. 22. and that then we ſhall live after the manner of angels, Luke xx. 36. without the neceſſities of this animal life. Theſe are the things we look for according to promiſe; and this expectation is our great relief againſt (1.) The fears of death, 1 Cor. xv. 55. (2.) Againſt the death of our friends and relations, 1 Theſ. iv. 14. (3.) Againſt all the preſſures and afflictions of this life, Job xix. 25, 26, 27.

But if the being of our ſouls fail at death, all hopes and comforts from the reſurrection fail with it; for it is not imaginable that the body ſhould riſe till it be revived, nor how it ſhould be revived, but by the re-union of the ſoul with it: and if it be not the ſame ſoul that now inhabits it, we cannot be the ſame perſons in the reſurrection we are now; and conſequently, this ſuppoſition ſubverts not only the doctrine of the reſurrection, but,

6. It overthrows alſo the faith of the judgment to come. For if the ſoul periſh, the body cannot riſe; or if it riſe by a new created ſoul, the perſon raiſed is another, and not the ſame that lived and died in this world; and conſequently, the rewards and puniſhments to be beſtowed and awarded to all men in that day, cannot be juſt and equal: for we believe, according to the ſcriptures, that,

(1.) The actions which men perform in this life, are not tranſient, but are filed to their account in the world to come; Gal. vi. 7. "here we ſow, and there we reap." Actions done in this world are two ways conſiderable, *viz.* phyſically, or morally; in the firſt conſideration they are tranſient, in the laſt, permanent and everlaſting. A word is ſpoken, or an act done, in a moment, but though it be paſt and gone, and perhaps by us quite forgotten, God regiſters it in his book, in order to the day of account.

(2.) We believe that God hath appointed a day in which all men ſhall appear before his judgment-ſeat, to give an account of all they have done in the body, whether it be good or evil, 2 Cor. v. 10.

(3.) And that in order hereunto, the very ſame perſons ſhall be reſtored by the reſurrection, and appear before God, the very ſame bodies and ſouls, which did good or evil in this world: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Juſtice requires that the rewards and puniſhments be then diſtributed to the

same persons that did good or evil in this world: which strongly infers the immortality of the soul, and that it certainly overlives the body, and must come back from the respective places of their abode, to be again united to them, in order to their great account.

By all which you see the clearest proof of the soul's immortality, and how the contrary supposition overthrows our faith, duties, and comforts. Yet notwithstanding all this, how apt are we to suspect this doctrine, and remain still dissatisfied and doubting about it, when all is said? Which comes to pass partly from the subtlety of Satan, who knows he can never persuade men to live the life of beasts, till he first persuade them to think they shall die as the beasts do. (2.) And partly from the influence of sense, and reason upon us, whereby we do too much suffer ourselves to be swayed, and imposed upon in matters of the greatest moment in religion. For these being proper arbiters, and judges, in other matters within their sphere, they are arrogant, and we easy enough to admit them to be arbiters also in things that are quite above them. Hence come such plausible objections as these:

Object. 1. The soul seems to vanish and die, when it leaves the body: for when it hath struggled as long as it can keep its possession in the body, and, at last, is forced to depart, we can perceive nothing but a puff of breath, which immediately vanishes into air, and is lost.

Solut. We can perceive, therefore it is nothing but what we do and can perceive, *viz.* a puff of vanishing breath. By this argument, the being of the soul in the body is as questionable, as after its departure out of the body; for we cannot discern it by sight in the body: yea, by this argument, we may as well deny the existence of God and angels, as of the soul; for it is a spiritual and invisible being, as they are; our gross senses are incapable of discerning spirits, which are immaterial, and invisible substances.

Object. 2. But you allow the soul to have a rise and beginning, it is not eternal *a parte ante*; and it is certain, whatever had a beginning, must have an end.

Solut. Every thing which had a beginning may have an end, and what once was nothing, may by the power that created it, be reduced to nothing again. But though we allow it may be so, by the absolute power of God, we deny the consequence, that therefore it shall, and must be so. Angels had a beginning, but shall never have an end. And indeed, their immortality,

as well as ours, flows not ſo much from the nature of either, as from the will and pleaſure of God, who hath appointed them to be ſo. He can, but never will, annihilate them.

Object. 3. But the ſoul depends upon matter in all its operations, nothing is in the underſtanding which was not firſt in the ſenſes; it uſeth the natural ſpirits, as its ſervants and tools, in all its operations, and therefore how can it either ſubſiſt or act in a ſtate of ſeparation?

Solut. 1. The hypotheſis is not only uncertain, but certainly falſe. There are acts performed by the ſoul, even whilſt it is in the body, wherein it makes no uſe at all of the body. Such are the acts of ſelf-intuition, and ſelf-reflection: and what will you ſay of its acts, in raptures and extaſies, ſuch as that of Paul, 2 Cor. xii. 2. and John, Rev. xxi. 10. what uſe did their ſouls make of the bodily ſenſes or natural ſpirits then?

Solut. 2. And though in its ordinary actions in this life, it doth uſe the body as its tool or inſtrument in working, doth it thence follow that it can neither ſubſiſt or act ſeparate from them in the other world? Whilſt a man is on horſe-back in his journey, he uſeth the help and ſervice of his horſe, and is moved according to the motion of his horſe; but doth it thence follow, he cannot ſtand nor walk alone, when diſmounted at his journey's end? We know angels both live and act, without the miniſtry of bodies, and our ſouls are ſpiritual ſubſtances as well as they.

Object. 4. But many ſcriptures ſeem to favour the total ceſſation of the ſoul's actions, if not of its being alſo, after ſeparation, as that in 2 Sam. xiv. 14. We muſt needs die, and are as water ſpilt upon the ground which cannot be gathered up; and Pſal. lxxxviii. 10, 11, 12. with Iſa. xxxviii. 18, 19. The dead cannot praiſe thee.

Solut. Theſe words of the woman of Tekoah are not to be underſtood abſolutely, but reſpectively: and the meaning is, that the ſoul is in the body as ſome precious liquor in a brittle glaſs, which being broken by death, the ſoul is irrecoverably gone, as the water ſpilt on the ground, which by no human power or art of man can be recovered again. All the means in the world cannot fetch it back into the body again. She ſpeaks not of the reſurrection, or what ſhall be done in the world to come, by the Almighty Power of God, but of what is impoſſible to be done in this world by all the ſkill and power of man.

And for the expreſſions of Heman and Hezekiah, they only reſpect, and relate unto thoſe ſervices their ſouls were now imployed about for the praiſe of God, with reſpect to the conver-

sion or edification of others, as Psal. xxx. 8, 9. or at most, to that mediate service and worship, which they give God, in and by their attendance upon his ordinances in this world, and not of that immediate service, and praise, that is performed and given him in heaven by the spirits of just men made perfect; such was the sweetness they had found in these ordinances and duties, that they express themselves as loth to leave them.

The same answer solves also the objections grounded upon other mistaken scriptures, as that of Psal. lxxviii. 39. where man is called a wind, that passeth away, and cometh not again. It is only expressive of the frailty and vanity of the present animal life we live in this world, to which we shall return no more after death; it denies not life to departed souls, but the end of this animal life at death: the life we live in the other world, is of a different nature.

Infer. 1. Is the soul immortal? Then *it is impossible for souls to find full rest and contentment in any enjoyments on this side heaven.* All temporary things are inadequate, and therefore unsatisfying to our souls. What gives the soul rest and satisfaction, must be as durable as the soul is; for if we could possibly find in this world a condition and state of things most agreeable in all other respects to our desires and wishes, yet if the soul be conscious to itself, that it shall, and must over-live and leave them all behind it, it can never reach true contentment, in the greatest affluence and confluence of them. Man being an immortal, is therefore a prospecting creature, and can never be satisfied with this, that it is well with him at present, except he can be satisfied that it shall be so for ever. The thoughts of leaving our delightful and pleasant enjoyments, imbitters them all to us whilst we have them. All outward things are in *fluxu continuo*, passing away as the waters, 1 Cor. vii. 31. Riches are uncertain, 1 Tim. vi. 17. "They fly away as an eagle to-"wards heaven, and with wings of their own making," Prov. xxiii. 5. *(i. e.)* As the feathers that enable a bird to fly from us, grow out of his own substance, so doth that vanity that carries away all earthly enjoyments. This alone will spoil all contentment.

Infer. 2. *Then see the ground and reason of Satan's envy and enmity against the soul, and his restless designs and endeavours to destroy it.* It grates that spirit of envy, to find himself, who is by nature immortal, sunk everlastingly and irrecoverably into misery, and the souls of men appointed to fill up those vacant places in heaven from which the angels fell. No creature but man is envied by Satan, and the soul of man much more than

his body: it is true, he afflicts the bodies of men when God permits him, but he ever aims at the soul when he wounds the body. Heb. x. 37. This roaring lion is continually going about, "seeking whom he may devour," 1 Pet. v. 8. It is the precious soul he hunts after; that is the *Morsus diaboli*, the bit he gapes for, as the wolf tears the fleece to come at the flesh. All the pleasure those miserable creatures find, is the success of their temptations upon the souls of men. It is a kind of delight to them to plunge souls into the same condemnation and misery with themselves. This is the trade they have been driving ever since their fall. By destroying souls, he at once exercises his revenge against God, and his envy against man, which is all the relief his miserable condition allows him.

Infer. 3. Do the souls of men out-live their bodies? *Then it is the height of madness and spiritual infatuation, to destroy the soul for the body's sake;* to cast away an immortal soul for the gratification of perishing flesh; to ruin the precious soul for ever, for the pleasures of sin which are but for a moment: yet this is the madness of millions of men. They will drown their own souls in everlasting perdition, to procure unnecessary things for the body, 1 Tim. vi. 9. "They that will be rich," &c. Every cheat and circumvention in dealing, every lie, every act of oppression, is a wound given the immortal soul, for the procuring some accommodations to the body.

O what soul-undoing bargains do some make with the devil! Some sell their souls out-right for the gratification of their lusts, 1 Kings xxi. 20. Many pawn their souls to Satan in a conditional bargain, so do all that venture upon sin, upon a presumption of pardon and repentance. The devil is a great trader for souls, he hath all sorts of commodities to suit all mens humours that will deal with him. He hath profits for the covetous, honours for the ambitious, pleasures for the voluptuous: but a soul is the price at which he sells them; only he will be content to sell at a day, and not require present pay; so that it be paid on a death-bed, in a dying hour, he is satisfied. But oh! what an undoing bargain do sinners make, to part with a treasure for a trifle! Mat. xvi. 26. the precious soul for ever, "for "the pleasures of sin, which are but for season!" Heb. xi. 25.

Prov. xx. 17. Prov. xxiii. 31, 32. Job xx. 12, 13. Jam. i. 15.

We are charmed with the present pleasure and sweetness there is in sin; but how bitter will the after-fruits thereof be! See the texts in the margin: you will say hereafter as Jonathan did, 1 Sam. xiv. 31. "I tasted but a little honey, and "I must die."

Infer. 4. *Then the exposing of the body to danger, yea, to certain destruction, for the preservation of the soul, is the dictate of spiritual wisdom, and that which every Christian is bound to chuse and practise, when both interests come in full opposition,* Heb. xi. 35. Dan. iii. 28. Rev. xii. 11. No promises of preferment, no threats of torments, have been able to prevail with the people of God to give the least wound, or do the least wrong to their own souls. When Secundus was commanded to deliver his bible, he answered, *Christianus sum, non traditor:* I am a Christian, I will not deliver it: then they desired him to deliver *aliquam ecvolam*, a chip, a straw, any thing that came to his hand in lieu of it: he refused to redeem his life by delivering the least trifle on that account to save it.

That is a great word of our Lord's, Luke ix. 24. "He that "will save his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth it for my sake "shall find it." Christians, this is your duty and wisdom, and must be your resolution and practice in the day of temptation, to yield your bodies to preserve your souls, as we offer our arm to defend the head. Oh! better thy body had never been given thee, than that it should be a snare to thy soul, and the instrument of casting it away for ever. Oh! how dear are some persons like to pay for their tenderness and indulgence to the flesh, when the hour of temptation shall come! mortify your irregular affections to the body, and never hazard your precious immortal souls for their sakes. It is the character of an hypocrite to chuse sin rather than affliction, Job xxxvi. 21. But if ever thou hast been in the deeps of spiritual troubles for sin, if God have opened thine eyes to see the evil of sin, the immense weight and value of thy soul, and of eternity, "Thou wilt "not count thy life dear to thee, to finish thy course with joy," Acts xx. 24.

Inference 5. If the soul be an immortal being, that shall have no end, *Then it is the great concern of all men to strive to the utmost for the salvation of their souls, whatever become of all lesser temporary interests in this world,* Luke xiii. 24. There is a gate, *i. e.* an introductive means of life and salvation: This gate is strait, *i. e.* there are a world of difficulties to be encountered in the way of salvation: but he that values and loves his never-dying soul, must, and will be diligent and constant in the use of all those means that have a tendency to salvation, be they never so difficult or unpleasant to flesh and blood. There be difficulties from within ourselves, such as mortification, self-denial, contempt of the world, parting with all at the call of Christ; and difficulties from without, the re-

proaches, perſecutions, and ſufferings for Chriſt, which would not be ſo great as they are, were it not for our unmortified luſts within; but be they what they will, we are bound to ſtrive through them all, for the ſalvation of our precious and immortal ſouls.

(1.) For it is the greateſt concernment of the ſoul, yea, of our own ſouls; we are bound to do much for the ſaving of another's ſoul, 2 Tim. ii. 10. much more for our own; this is our darling, Pſal. xxii. our only one.

(2.) Others have done and ſuffered much for the ſaving of their ſouls; and are not ours, or ought they not to be, as dear to us, as the ſouls of any others have been to them? Matth. xxi. 32.

(3.) The utmoſt diligence is little enough to ſave them. Do all that you can do, and ſuffer all that you can ſuffer, and deny yourſelves as deeply as ever any did, yet you ſhall find all this little enough to ſecure them, 1 Pet. iv. 18. The righteous themſelves are ſcarcely ſaved, 1 Cor. ix. 24.

(4.) The time to ſtrive for ſalvation is very ſhort and uncertain, Luke xiii. 25. John xii. 35. It will be to no purpoſe, when the ſeaſons and opportunities of ſalvation are once over. There is no ſtriving in hell, a death-pang of deſpair hath ſeized them, hope is extinguiſhed, and endeavours fail.

(5.) Doth not reaſon dictate and direct you to do now, whilſt you are in the way, as you will wiſh you had done, and repent with rage, and ſelf-indignation, becauſe you did it not, when you come to the end, and behold the final iſſues of things? Suppoſe but thyſelf now either, (1.) Upon a death-bed, launching into eternity; (2.) Or at the bar of Chriſt; (3.) Or in view of heaven; (4.) Or in the ſight and hearing of the damned: what think you? will you not then wiſh, Oh! that I had ſpent every moment in the world that could poſſibly be redeemed from the pure neceſſities of life, in prayer, in hearing, in ſtriving for ſalvation. From a proſpect of this it was, that one ſpent many hours daily on his knees to the macerating of his body; and being admoniſhed of the danger of health, and adviſed to relax, he anſwered, *I muſt die, I muſt die.*

Objection 1. Do not ſay, you have many incumbrances, and other employments in the world: for (1.) "One thing is neceſ-"ſary," Luke x. 42. Thoſe are conveniences, but this is of abſolute neceſſity. (2.) They will thrive the better for this, Mat. vi. 33. "Seek this, and they ſhall be added." (3.) Do but *redeem the time* that can be redeemed to this purpoſe; let not ſo much precious time run waſte as daily doth.

Objection 2. Say not, no man can save his soul by his own striving, and therefore it is to little purpose; for "it is not of him "that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that shew-"eth mercy," Rom. ix. 16.

True, this in itself cannot save you; but what then? must we oppose those things which God hath subordinated? Bring this home to your natural or civil actions, eating, drinking, ploughing, or sowing, and see how the consequence will look.

Objection 3. Say not, it is a mercenary doctrine, and disparages free grace; for, are not all the enjoyments and comforts of this life confessedly from free grace, though God hath dispensed them to you in the way of your diligence and industry.

Objection 4. To conclude; Say not, the difficulties of salvation are insuperable; it is so hard to watch every motion of the heart, to deny every lust, to resist a suitable temptation, to suffer the *loss of all for Christ*, that there is no hope for overcoming them.

For (1.) God can, and doth make difficult things easy to his people, who work in the strength of Christ, Phil. iv. 13. (2.) These same difficulties are before all others that are before you, yet it discourageth not them, Phil. iii. 11. Others strive to the uttermost. There are extremes found in this matter: some work for salvation, as an hireling for his wages, so the Papists; these disparage grace, and cry up works. Others cry down obedience as legal, as the Antinomians, and cry up grace to the disparagement of duties. Avoid both these, and see that you strive: But (1.) Think not heaven to be the price of your striving, Rom. iv. 3. (2.) Strive, but not for a spurt; let this care and diligence run throughout your lives; whilst you are living, be you still striving: your souls are worth it; and infinitely more than all this amounts to.

Infer. 6. Doth the soul out-live the body, and abide for ever? *Then it is a great evil and folly to be excessively careful for the mortal body, and neglective of the immortal inhabitant.* In a too much indulged body, there ever dwells a too much neglected soul.

The body is but a *vile thing*, Phil. iii. 21. the soul *more valuable than the whole world*, Matth. xvi. 26. To spend time, care, and pains for a vile body, whilst little or no regard is had to the precious immortal soul, is an unwarrantable folly and madness. *To have a clear and washed body, and a soul all filth*, (as one speaks) *a body neatly cloathed and dressed, with a soul all naked and unready; a body fed, and a soul starved; a body full*

of the creature, and a ſoul empty of Chriſt; theſe are poor ſouls indeed. We ſmile at little children, who in a kind of laborious idleneſs take a great deal of pains to make and trim their babies, or build their little houſes of ſticks and ſtraws: And what are they but children of a bigger ſize, that keep ſuch ado about the body, a houſe of clay, a weak pile, that muſt periſh in a few days. It is admirable, and very convictive of moſt Chriſtians, what we read in a Heathen. "I confeſs (ſaith * Seneca) there is "a love to the body implanted in us all; we have the tutelage "and charge of it; we may be kind and indulgent to it, but "muſt not ſerve it; but he that ſerves it, is a ſervant to many "cares, fears, and paſſions. Let us have a diligent care of it; "yet ſo as when reaſon requires, when our dignity or faith re-"quires it, we commit it to the fire."

It is true, the body is beloved of the ſoul, and God requires, that it moderately care for the neceſſities and conveniences of it; but to be fond, indulgent, and conſtantly ſolicitous about it, is both the ſin and ſnare of the ſoul. One of the fathers being invited to dine with a lady, and waiting ſome hours till ſhe was dreſſed, and fit to come down; when he ſaw her, he fell a weeping; and being demanded why he wept, *Oh!* ſaith he, *I am troubled that you ſhould ſpend ſo many hours this morning in pinning and trimming your body, when I have not ſpent half the time in praying, repenting, and caring for my own ſoul.* Two things a maſter commits to his ſervant's care, (ſaith one) the child, and the child's cloaths: It will be but a poor excuſe for the ſervant to ſay, at his maſter's return, Sir, here are all the child's cloaths neat and clean, but the child is loſt. Much ſo will be the account that many will give to God of their ſouls, and bodies, at the great day, *Lord, here is my body, I was very careful for it, I neglected nothing that belonged to its content and welfare: But for my ſoul, that is loſt and caſt away for ever, I took little care and thought about it.* It is remarkable what the apoſtle ſaith, Rom. viii. 12. We owe nothing to the fleſh, we are not in its debt, we have given it all, more than all

* *Fateor inſitam eſſe nobis corporis noſtri charitatem. Fateor nos hujus gerere tutelam, nec ego indulgendum illi, ſerviendum nego. Multis enim ſerviet qui corpori ſerviet, qui pro illo nimium timet, qui ad illud omnia refert; hujus nos nimius amor timoribus inquietat, ſolicitudinibus onerat, contumeliis objicit: honeſtum ei vile eſt cui corpus nimis charum eſt: agatur ejus diligentiſſime cura: ita tamen ut cum exiget ratio, cum dignitas, cum fides, mittendum in ignem ſit.* Senec. Ep. 14. p. 545.

that belongs to it: But we owe many an hour, many a care, many a deep thought to our souls, which we have defrauded it of for the vile body's sake. You have robbed your souls to pay your flesh. This is madness.

Infer. 7. *How great a blessing is the gospel, which brings life and immortality to light, the most desirable mercies to immortal souls!* This is the great benefit we receive by it, as the apostle speaks, 2 Tim. i. 10. "Christ hath abolished death, and brought "life and immortality to light by the gospel." Life and immortality by a εν δια δυοιν, is put for immortal life, the thing which all immortal souls desire and long for. These desires are found in souls that enjoy not the gospel-light; for, as I said before, they naturally spring out of the very nature of all immortal souls: But how and where it is to be obtained, that is a secret for which we are entirely beholden to the gospel-discovery. It lay hid in the womb of God's purpose, till by the light of gospel-revelation it was made manifest. But now all men may see what are the gracious thoughts and purposes of God concerning men, and what that is he hath designed for their immortal souls, even an immortal life; and this life is to be obtained by Christ, than which no tidings can be more welcome, sweet or acceptable to us.

Oh therefore study the Gospel. "This is life eternal, to "know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou "hast sent," John xvii. 3. And see that you prize the gospel above all earthly treasures. *It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.* You have two inestimable benefits and blessings by it. (1.) It manifests and reveals eternal life to you, which you could never have come to the knowledge of any other way; those that are without it, are groping or feeling after God in the dark, Acts xvii. 27. Poor souls are conscious to themselves, that there is a just and terrible God, and that their sins offend and provoke him; but how to atone the offended Deity they know not, Micah vi. 6, 7. But the way of reconciliation and life is clearly discovered to us by the gospel. (2.) As it manifests and reveals eternal life to us, so it frames and moulds our hearts, as God's sanctifying instrument, for the enjoyment of it. It is not only the instrument of revelation, but of salvation, the word of life, as well as the word of light, Phil. ii. 16. It can open your hearts, as well as your eyes, and is therefore to be entertained as that which is the first rank of blessings, a peerless and inestimable blessing.

Infer. 8. If our souls be immortal, *certainly our enemies are*

not so formidable as we are apt, by our sinful fears, to represent them. They may, when God permits them, destroy your bodies, they cannot touch or destroy your souls, Mat. x. 28. As to your bodies, no enemy can touch them till there be leave and permission given them by God, Job i. 10. The bodies of the saints, as well as their souls, are within the line or hedge of Divine Providence: They are securely fenced, sometimes mediately by the ministry of angels, Psal. xxxiv. 7. and sometimes immediately by his own hand and power, Zech. ii. 5. As to their souls, whatever power enemies may have upon them, (when divine permission opens a gap in the hedge of providence for them) yet they cannot reach their souls to hurt them, or destroy them, but by their own consent. They can destroy our perishing flesh, it is obnoxious to their malice and rage; they cannot reach home to the soul: No sword can cut asunder the band of union between them and Christ; they would be dreadful enemies indeed if they could do so. Why then do we tremble and fear at this rate, as if soul and body were at their mercy, and in their power and hand? The souls of those *martyrs* were in safety under the *altar* in heaven, they were cloathed with *white robes*, when their bodies were given to be meat to the fowls of heaven, and beasts of the earth. The devil drives but a poor trade by the persecution of the saints; he tears the *nest*, but the *bird* escapes; he cracks the *shell*, but loseth the *kernel*. Two things make a powerful defensative against our fears: (1.) That all our enemies are in the hand of providence. (2.) That all providences are steered by that promise, Rom. viii. 28.

Infer. 9. If souls be immortal, *Then there must needs be a vast difference betwixt the aspects and influences of death upon the godly and ungodly.*

Oh! if souls would but seriously consider what an alteration death will make upon their condition, for evil or for good, how useful would such meditations be to them! (1.) They must be disseized and turned out of these houses of clay, and live in a state of separation from them; of this there is an inevitable necessity, Eccl. viii. 8. It is vain to say, I am not ready; ready or unready, they must depart when their lease is out. It is as vain to say, I am not willing; for willing or unwilling, they must be gone; there is no hanging back, and begging, *Lord, let death take another at this time, and spare me;* for no man dies by a proxy. (2.) The time of our souls departure is at hand, 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. Job. xvi. 22. The most firm and well built body can stand but a few days; but our ruinous tabernacles give

our souls warning, that the day of their departure is at hand. The lamp of life is almost burnt down, the glass of time is almost run; yet a few, a very few days and nights more, and then time, nights and days shall be no more. (3.) When that most certain and near-approaching time is come, wonderful alterations will be made on the state of all souls, godly, and ungodly.

(1.) A marvellous alteration will then be made on the souls of the godly. For, (1.) No sooner is the dividing stroke given by death, and the parting pull over, but they shall find themselves in the arms of angels, mounting them through the upper regions in a few moments, far above all the aspectable heavens, Luke xvi. 22. The airy region is, indeed, the place where devils inhabit, and have their haunts and walks; but angels are the saints convoy through Satan's territories, from the arms of mourning friends, into the welcome arms of officious and benevolent angels. (2.) From the sight and converses of men, to the sight of God, Christ, and the general assembly of blessed and sinless spirits. The soul takes its leave of all men at death, Isa. xxxviii. 11. Farewel vain world, with all the mixed and imperfect comforts of it, and welcome the more sweet, suitable, and satisfying company of Father, Son, and Spirit, holy angels, and perfected saints, Heb. xii. 23. (3.) From the bondage of corruption, to perfect liberty, and everlasting freedom; so much is implied, Heb. xii. 23. "The spirits of just men made perfect." (4.) From all fears, doubtings, and questionings of our conditions, and anxious debates of our title to Christ, to the clearest, fullest, and most satisfying assurance; for what a man sees, how can he doubt of it? (5.) From all burdens of affliction, inward and outward, under which we have groaned all our days, to everlasting rest and ease, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, 3. Oh what a blessed change to the righteous must this be!

(2.) A marvellous change will also be then made upon the souls of the ungodly, who shall then part from (1.) All their comforts and pleasant enjoyments in the world; for here they had their consolation; Luke xvi. 25. here was all their portion, Psal. xvii. 14. and, in a moment, find themselves arrested and seized by Satan, as God's goaler, hurrying them away to the prison of hell, 1 Pet. iii. 19. "there to be reserved to the judg-"ment of the great day," Jude 6. (2.) From under the means of grace, life, and salvation, to a state perfectly void of all means, instruments, and opportunities of salvation, John ix. 4. Eccl. ix. 10. never to hear the joyful sound of preaching or praying any more; never to hear the wooing voice of the blessed bridegroom, saying, Come unto me, come unto me, any more.

(3.) From all their vain, ungrounded, presumptuous hopes of heaven, into absolute and final desperation of mercy. The very sinews and nerves of hope are cut by death, Prov. xiv. 32. "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death." These are the great and astonishing alterations that will be made upon our souls, after they part with the bodies which they now inhabit. Oh that we, who cannot but be conscious to ourselves that we must over live our bodies, were more thoughtful of the condition they must enter into, after that separation which is at hand.

Infer. 10. If our souls be immortal, *then death is neither to be feared by them in heaven, nor hoped for them in hell.* The being of souls never fails, whether they be in a state of blessedness or of misery. "In glory they are ever with the Lord." 1 Thes. iv. 17. There shall be no death there, Rev. xxi. 4. And in hell, though they shall wish for death, yet death shall flee from them *. Though there be no fears of annihilation in heaven, yet there may be many wishes for it in hell, but to no purpose; there never will be an end put, either to their being, or to their torments. In this respect no other creatures are capable of the misery that wicked men are capable of: When they die, there is the end of all their misery; but it is not so with men. Better therefore had it been for them, if God had created them in the basest, and lowest order and rank of creatures; a dog, a toad, a worm, is better than a man in endless misery, ever dying, and never dead. *And so much of the souls immortality.*

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EPH. v. 29. *For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.*

HAVING given some account of the nature and immortality of the soul, we next come, from this text, to discourse of its *love and inclination to the body*, with which it is united. The scope of the apostle is, to press Christians to the exact discharge of those relative duties they owe to each other; particularly, he here urgeth the mutual duties of husbands and wives, ver. 22. wives to an obedient subjection, husbands to a tender love of their wives. This exhortation he enforceth from the

* O death thou art sweet to those to whom thou wast formerly bitter: They desire thee alone, who did hate thee alone. *August.*

intimate union, which, by the ordinance of God, is betwixt them, they being now one flesh. And this union he illustrates by comparing it with,

1. The mystical union of Christ and the church.

2. The natural union of the soul and body.

And from both these, as excellent examples and patterns, he, with great strength of argument, urgeth the duty of love; ver. 28. "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies; he "that loveth his wife, loveth himself." Self love is naturally implanted in all men, and it is the rule by which we measure out and dispense our love to others.——"Thou shalt love thy "neighbour as thyself."

This self-love he opens in this place, by,

(1.) The universality of it.

(2.) The effects that evidence it.

1. The universality of it. *No man ever yet hated his own flesh.* By *flesh*, understand the body by an usual *metonymy* of a part for the whole, called flesh. By *hating* it, understand a simple hatred, or hatred itself. It is usual for men to hate the deformities and diseases of their own bodies, and upon that account to deal with the members of their own bodies as if they hated them; hence it is, they willingly stretch forth a gangrened leg or arm to be cut off, for the preservation of the rest: but this is not a simple hatred of a man's self, but rather an argument of the strength of the soul's love to the body, that it will be content to endure so much pain and anguish for its sake. And if the soul be at any time weary of, and willing to part, not with a single member only, but with the whole body, and loaths its union with it any longer, yet it hates it and loaths it not simply in, and for itself, but because it is so filled with diseases all over, and loads the soul daily with so much grief, that how well soever the soul loves it in itself, yet upon such sad terms and conditions it would not be tied to it. This was Job's case, Job x. 1. "My soul is weary of my life;" yet not simply of his life, but of such a life, in pain and trouble. Except it be in such respects and cases, *no man*, saith he, *ever yet hated his own flesh; i. e.* no man in his right mind, and in the exercise of his reason and sense; for we must except distracted and delirious men, who know not what they do, as also men under the terrors of conscience, when God suffers it to rage in extremity, as Spira and others, who would have been glad with their own hands to have cut the threed that tied their miserable souls to their bodies, supposing that way, and by that change, to find

some relief. Either of these cases forces men to act beside the stated rule of nature and reason.

2. This love of the soul to the body is further discovered by the effects which evidence it, *viz.* its nourishing and cherishing the body, ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλπει. These two comprize the necessaries for the body, *viz.* food and raiment. The first signifies to nourish with proper food; the latter to warm by cloathing, as the word θάλπειν is rendered, James ii. 16. to which the Hebrew word חמם answers, Job xxxi. 20. The care and provision of these things for the body evidences the soul's love to it.

Doct. *That the souls of men are strongly inclined, and tenderly affected, towards the bodies in which they now dwell.*

The soul's love to the body is so strong, natural, and inseparable, that it is made the rule and measure by which we dispense and proportion our love to others, Matth. xix. 19. "Thou "shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And the apostle, Gal. v. 14. tells us, That the whole law, *i. e.* the second table of the law, is fulfilled, or summed up in this precept, "Thou "shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The meaning is not, that all and every one who is our neighbour, must be equally near to us as our own bodies; but it intends, (1.) The sincerity of our love to others, which must be without dissimulation, for we dissemble not in self-love. (2.) That we be as careful to avoid injuring others, as we would ourselves, Matth. vii. 12. To do by others, or measure to them, as we would have done or measured unto us: for which rule, Severus the Heathen emperor, honoured Christ and Christianity, and caused it to be written in capital letters of gold. (3.) That we take direction from this principle of self-love, to measure out our care, love, and respects to others, according to the different degrees of nearness in which we stand to them. As, (1.) The wife of our bosom, to whom, by this rule, is due our first care and love, as in the text. (2.) Our children and family, 1 Tim. v. 8. (3.) To all in general, whether we have any bond of natural relation upon them or no; but especially those to whom we are spiritually related, as Gal. vi. 10. And indeed, as every Christian hath a right to our love and care above other men, so in some cases, we are to exceed this rule of self-love, by a transcendent act of self-denial for them, 1 John iii. 16. And Paul went higher than that, in a glorious excess of charity to the community or body of God's people, preferring their salvation not only to his own body, but to his soul also, Rom. ix. 3. But to these extraordinary cases we are seldom called; and if we be, the gospel furnisheth us with an higher rule

than self-love, John xiii. 34. But by this principle of self-love, in all ordinary cases, we must proportion and dispense our love to all others; by which you see what a deep-rooted and fixed principle in nature self-love is, how universal and permanent alone this is, which else were not fit to be made the measure of our love to all others.

Two things will deserve our consideration in the doctrinal part of this point.

First, Wherein the soul evidenceth its love to the body.

Secondly, What are the grounds and fundamental causes or reasons of its love to it; and then apply it.

First, Wherein the soul evidenceth its love to the body, and that it doth in divers respects.

1. In its cares for the things needful to the body, as the text speaks, in nourishing and cherishing it, *i. e.* taking care for food and raiment for it. This care is universal, it is implanted in the most savage and barbarous people; and is generally so excessive and exorbitant, that though it never needs a spur, yet most times, and with most men, it doth need a curb; and therefore Christ, in Matth. vi. 32. shews how those cares torture and distract the nations of the world, warns them against the like excesses, and propounds a rule to them for the allay and mitigation of them, ver. 25, 26, 27. So doth the apostle also, 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31. To speak as the matter is, most souls are over-heated with their cares, and eager pursuit after the concerns of the body. They pant after the dust of the earth. They pierce themselves through with many sorrows, 1 Tim. vi. 10. They are cumbered like Martha with much serving. It is a perfect drudge and slave to the body, bestowing all its time, strength, and studies about the body: for one soul that puts the question to itself, "What shall I do to be saved?" a thousand are to be found that mind nothing more, but, "What "shall I eat, what shall I drink, and wherewithal shall I and "mine be cloathed?" I do not say, that these are proofs of the soul's regular love to the body; no, they differ from it, as a fever does from natural heat. This is a doating fondness upon the body. He truly loves his body, that moderately and ordinately cares for what is necessary for it, and can keep it under, 1 Cor. ix. 27. and deny its whinning appetite, when indulgence is prejudicial to the soul, or warms its lusts. Believers themselves find it hard to keep the golden bridle of moderation upon their affections in this matter. It is not every man that hath attained Agur's cool temper, Prov. xxx. 8. that can slack his

pace and drive moderately, where the interests of the body are concerned: the best souls are too warm, the generality in raging heats, which distract their minds, as that word, Matth. vi. 25. μη μεριμνατε, signifies. If the body were not exceeding dear to the soul, it would never torture itself, day and night, with such anxious cares about it.

2. The soul discovers its esteem and value for the body in all the fears it hath about it. Did not the soul love it exceedingly, it would never be affrighted for it, and on its account, so much and so often as it is. What a panic fear do the dangers of the body cast the soul into? Isa. vii. 2. When the body is in danger, the soul is in distraction, the soul is in fears and tremblings about it: these fears flow from the souls tender love and affection to the body; if it did not love it so intensely, it would never afflict and torment itself at that rate it doth about it: Satan, the professed enemy of our souls, being throughly acquainted with those fears which flow from the fountain of love to the body, politicly improves them in the way of temptation, to the utter ruin of some, and the great hazard of other souls; he edges and sharpens his temptations upon us this way; he puts our bodies into danger, that he may thereby endanger our souls; he reckons, if he can but draw the body into danger, fear will quickly drive the soul into temptation: it is not so much from Satan's malice or hatred of our bodies, that he stirs up persecutions against us: but he knows the tie of affection is so strong betwixt these friends, that love will draw, and fear will drive the soul into many and great hazards of its own happiness, to free the body out of those dangers. Prov. xxix. 25. "The "fear of man brings a snare:" and Heb. xi. 37. "Tortured "and tempted."

Upon this ground also it is, that this life becomes a life of temptation to all men, and there is no freedom from that danger, till we be freed from the body, and set at liberty by death. Separated souls are the only free souls. They that carry no flesh about them, need carry no fears of temptation within them. It is the body which catches the sparks of temptation.

3. The soul manifests its dear love and affection to the body, by its sympathy, and compassionate feeling of all its burdens: whatever touches the body, by way of injury, affects the soul also by way of sympathy. The soul and body are as strings of two musical instruments, set exactly at one height; if one be touched, the other trembles. They laugh and cry, are sick and well together. This is a wonderful mystery, and a rare secret (as a learned man observes) how the soul comes to sympathize

with the body, and to have not only a knowledge, but as it were a feeling of its neceſſities and infirmities; how this fleſhly lump comes to affect, and make its deep impreſſions upon a creature of ſo different a nature from it, as the ſoul or ſpirit is. But that it doth ſo, tho' we know not how, is plain and ſenſible to any man. If any member of the body, tho' but the loweſt and meaneſt, be in pain and miſery, the ſoul is preſently affected with it, and commands the eyes to watch, yea, to weep, the hands to bind it up with all tenderneſs, and defend it from the leaſt injurious touch; the lips to complain of its miſery, and beg pity and help from others for it. If the body be in danger, how are the faculties of the ſoul, underſtanding, memory, invention, *&c.* employed with utmoſt ſtrength and concernment for its deliverance! This is a real and unexceptionable evidence of its dear and tender love to the body. As thoſe that belong to one myſtical body ſhew their ſincere love this way, 1 Cor. xii. 25, 26. ſo the ſoul.

4. The ſoul manifeſteth its love to the body, by its fears of death, and extreme averſation to a ſeparation from it. On this account, death is called in Job xviii. 14. "The king of ter-"rors," or the black prince, or the prince of clouds and darkneſs, as ſome tranſlate that place: We read it, "The king of "terrors," meaning, that the terrors at death are ſuch terrors as ſubdue and keep down all other terrors under them, as a prince doth his ſubjects. Other terrors compared with thoſe that the ſoul conceives and conflicts with at parting, are no more than a cut finger, to the laying one's head on the block. Oh! the ſoul and body are ſtrongly twiſted and knit together in dear bands of intimate union and affection, and theſe bands cannot be broken without much ſtruggling: Oh! it is a hard thing for the ſoul to bid the body farewel, it is a bitter parting, a doleful ſeparation: Nothing is heard in that hour but the moſt deep and emphatical groans; I ſay *emphatical groans*, the deep ſenſe and meaning of which the living are but little acquainted with: For no man living hath yet felt the ſorrows of a parting pull; whatſoever other ſorrows he hath felt in the body, yet they muſt be ſuppoſed to be far ſhort of theſe.

The ſorrows of death are in ſcripture ſet forth unto us, by the bearing throes of a travailing woman, Acts ii. 24. ὠδῖνας τοῦ θανάτου, and what thoſe mean, many can tell. The ſoul is in labour, it will not let go its hold of the body, but by conſtraint: Death is a cloſe ſiege, and when the ſoul is beaten out of its body, it diſputes the paſſage with death, as ſoldiers uſe

to do with an enemy that enters by storm, and fights and strives to the last: It is also compared to a *battle* or *sharp fight*, Eccl. viii. 8. *that war.* That war with an emphasis. No conflict so sharp, each labour to the utmost to drive the other from the ground they stand on, and win the field. And though grace much over-powers nature in this matter, and reconciles it to death, and makes it desire to be dissolved, yet saints wholly put not off this reluctation of nature, 2 Cor. v. 2. Not that we would be uncloathed; as it is with one willing to wade over a brook to his father's house, puts his foot into the water, and feels it cold, starts back, and is loth to venture in; *Not that we would be uncloathed.* And if it be so with sanctified souls, how is it, think you, with others? Mark the scripture language, Job xxvii. 8. God taketh away their souls, saith our translation; but the root is, נטל *extrahere*, and signifies to pull out by plain force and violence. A graceless soul dieth not by consent, but force. Thus Adrian bewailed his departure, *O Animula, vagula, blandula, heu quo vadis!* Yea, tho' the soul have never so long a time been in the body, though it should live as long as the *Antideluvian fathers* did, for many hundred years, yet still it would be loth to part; yea, though it endure abundance of misery in the body, and have little rest or comfort, but time spent in griefs and fears, yet for all that it is loth to part with it. All this shews a strong inclination and affection to it.

5. Its desire of re-union continuing still with it, in its state of separation, speaks its love to the body. As the soul parted with it in grief and sorrow, so it still retains, even in glory, an inclination to re-union, and waits for a day of re-espousals: and to that sense some searching and judicious men understand those words of Job, chap. xiv. 14. "If a man die, shall he live again?" *viz.* by a resurrection: if so, then all the days of my appointed separation, my soul in heaven shall wait till that change come. And to the same sense is that cry of separated souls, Rev. vi. 9, 10, 11. "How long, O Lord, how long?" *(i. e.)* to the consummation of all things, when judgment shall be executed on them that killed our bodies, and our bodies so long absent, restored to us again? In that day of resurrection, the souls of the saints come willingly from heaven itself, to repossess their bodies, and bring them to a partnership with them in their glory: for it is with the soul in heaven as it is with an husband who is richly entertained, feasted, and lodged abroad, but his dear wife is solitary and comfortless; it abates the completeness of his joy. Therefore we say, the saints joy is not consummate till that day.

There is an exerciſe for faith, hope and deſires, on this account in heaven.

The union of ſoul and body is natural, their ſeparation is not ſo: many benefits will redound to both by a re-union, and the reſurrection of the body is provided by God, as the grand relief againſt thoſe prejudices and loſſes the bodies of the ſaints ſuſtain by ſeparation. I ſay not that the propenſion or inclination of the ſoul to re-union with its body, is accompanied with any perturbation or anxiety, in its ſtate of ſeparation; for it enjoys God, and in him a placid reſt; and as the body, ſo the ſoul reſts in hope; it is ſuch a hope as diſturbs not the reſt of either: yet when the time is come for the ſoul to be re-eſpouſed, it is highly gratified by that ſecond marriage, glad it is to ſee its old dear companion, as two friends after a long ſeparation. And ſo much of the evidence of the ſoul's love to the body.

Secondly, Next we are to enquire into the grounds and reaſons of its love and inclination to the body. And,

1. The fundamental ground and reaſon thereof will be found in their natural union with each other. There my text lays it: "No man ever yet hated his [own] fleſh." Mark, the body is the ſoul's own; they are ſtrictly married and related to each other: the ſoul hath a propriety in its body, theſe two make up, or conſtitute one perſon: True, they are not eſſentially one, they have far different natures, but they are perſonally one; and though the ſoul be what it was, after its ſeparation, yet to make a man the who he was, *(i. e.)* the ſame complete and perfect perſon, they muſt be re-united. Hence ſprings its love to the body. Every man loves his own, John xvii. 19. All the world is in love with its own, and hence it cares to provide for its welfare, 1 Tim v. 8. "If any man provide not for his own, he is worſe than an "infidel." For nature teacheth all men to do ſo. Why are children dearer to parents than to all others, but becauſe they are their own? Job xix. 17. But our wives, our children, our goods, are not ſo much our own, as our bodies are; this is the neareſt of all natural unions.

And this is no more than neceſſary for the conſervation of the ſpecies, elſe the body would be neglected, expoſed, and quickly periſh, being had in no more regard than any other body.

In this propriety and relation are involved the reaſons and motives of our love to, and care over the body, which is no more than what is neceſſary to their preſervation. For, were it not for this propriety and relation, no man would be at any

more cost or pains for his own body, than for that of a stranger. It is propriety which naturally draws love, care, and tenderness along with it; and these are ordered by the wisdom of providence, for the conservation of the body, which would quickly perish without it.

2. The body is the soul's ancient acquaintance, and intimate friend, with whom it hath assiduously and familiarly conversed from its beginning. They have been partners in each others comforts and sorrows. They may say to each other, as Micomius did to his colleague, with whom he had spent twenty years in the government of the *Thuringian church: Currimus, certavimus, laboravimus, pugnavimus, vicimus, et victimus conjunctissime;* We have run, striven, laboured, fought, overcome, and lived most intimately and lovingly together. Consuetude, and daily conversation, begets and conciliates friendship and love betwixt creatures of contrary natures: Let a lamb be brought up with a lion, and the lion will express a tenderness towards it, much more the soul to its own body.

3. The body is the soul's house, and beloved habitation, where it was born, and hath lived ever since it had a being, and in which it hath enjoyed all its comforts, natural and supernatural, which cannot but strengthen the souls engagement to it. Upon this account the apostle calls it the soul's home, 2 Cor. v. 6. "Whilst we are at home in the body." It is true, this house is not so comfortable an habitation, that it should be much desired by many souls; we may say of many gracious souls, that they pay a dear rent for the house they dwell in: or as it was said of Galba, *Anima Galbae male habitat*, their souls are but ill accommodated; but yet it is their home, and therefore beloved by them.

4. The body is the soul's instrument by which it doth its work and business in the world, both natural and religious, Rom. vi. 13. Through the bodily senses it takes in all the natural comforts of this world, and by the bodily members it performs all its duties and services. When these are broken and laid aside by death, the soul knows it can work no more in that way it now doth, John ix. 4. Eccl. ix. 10. Natural men love their bodies for the natural pleasures, they are instrumental to convey to their souls; and spiritual men, for the use and service they are of to their own, and other souls, Phil. i. 23.

5. The body is the soul's partner in the benefit of Christ's purchases. It was bought with the same price, 1 Cor. vi. 20. sanctified by the same Spirit, 1 Thess. v. 23. interested in the same promises, Matth. xxii. 32. and designed for the same

glory, 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. So that we may say of it as it was said of Augustine and his friend Alippius, they are *sanguine Christi conglutinati*, glewed together by the blood of Christ. And thus of the grounds and reasons of its love.

Infer. 1. Is it so? *Learn hence the mighty strength and prevalence of divine love, which over powering all natural affections, doth not only enable the souls of men to take their separation from the body patiently, but to long for it ardently*, Phil. i. 23. While some need patience to die, others need it as much to live, 2 Thes. iii. 5. It is said, Rev. xii. 11. "They loved not their lives." And indeed, on these terms they first closed with Christ, Luke xii. 26. "to hate their lives for his sake," *(i. e.)* to love them in so remiss a degree, that whenever they shall come in competition with Christ, to regard them no more than the things we hate.

The love of Christ is to be the supreme love, and all others to be subordinate to it, or quenched by it. It is not its own comfort in the body, it principally and ultimately designs and aims at, but Christ's glory; and if this may be furthered by the death of the body, its death thereupon becomes as eligible to the soul as its life, Phil. i. 20. Oh! this is an high pitch of grace, a great attainment, to say as one did, *vivere renuo, ut Christo vivam;* I refuse life, to be with Christ: Or another, when he was asked whether he was willing to die? answered, *illius est nolle mori, qui nolit ire ad Christium;* let him be loth to die, that is loth to go to Christ. So, 2 Cor. v. 8. "We are "willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the "Lord."

It is not every Christian that can arrive to this degree of love, though they love Christ sincerely, yet they shrink from death cowardly, and are loth to be gone. There are two sorts of grounds upon which christians may be loth to be unbodied; 1. Sinful. 2. Allowable.

1. The sinful and unjustifiable grounds are such as these, viz. (1.) Guilt upon the conscience, which will damp and discourage the soul, and make it loth to die. It arms death with terror, "the sting of death is sin." (2.) Unmortified affections to the world, I mean in such a degree as is necessary to sweeten death, and make a man a volunteer in that sharp engagement with that last, and dreadful enemy. It is with our hearts as with fuel; if green, and full of sap, it will not burn; but if that be dried up, it catches presently. Mortification is the drying up of carnal affections to the creature, which is that which resists death, as green wood doth the fire. (3.) The

weakneſs and cloudineſs of faith. You need faith to die by, as well as live by, Heb. xi. 13. *All died in faith.* The leſs ſtrength there is in faith, the more in death. A ſtrong believer welcomes the meſſengers of death, when a weak one, unleſs extraordinarily aſſiſted, trembles at them.

2. There are grounds on which we may deſire a longer continuance in the body, warrantably and allowably: As (1.) to do him yet more ſervice in our bodies, before we lay them down. Thus the ſaints have pleaded for longer life, Pſal. xxx. 9. Pſal. lxxxviii. 11, 12, 13. and Iſa. xxxviii. 18, 19. (2.) To ſee the clouds of God's anger diſpelled, whether public or perſonal, and a clear light break out e'er we die; Pſal. xxvii. 13. (3.) They may deſire, with ſubmiſſion, to out-live the days of perſecution, and not to be delivered into the hands of cruel men, but come to their graves in peace, Pſal. xxxi. 15. and 2 Theſſ. iii. 2. that they may be delivered from abſurd men.

3. But though ſome Chriſtians ſhun death upon a ſinful account, and others upon a juſtifiable one; yet others there are, who ſeeing their title clear, their work done, and reliſhing the joys of heaven, in the prelibations of faith, are willing to be uncloathed, and to be with Chriſt. Their love to Chriſt hath extinguiſhed in them the love of life; and they can ſay with Paul, Acts xxi. 13. *I am ready.* Ignatius longed to come to thoſe beaſts that were to devour him; and ſo many of the primitive Chriſtians: Chriſt was ſo dear, that their lives were cheap, and low-prized things for this enjoyment. And here indeed is the glory and triumph of a Chriſtian's faith and love to Chriſt: For (1.) it enables him to part chearfully with what he ſees and feels, for what his eyes never yet ſaw, 1 Pet. i. 8. "Whom "having not ſeen, ye love." (2.) To part with what is deareſt on earth, and lies neareſt the heart of all he enjoys, for Chriſt's ſake. (3.) To reconcile his heart to what is moſt abhorrent and formidable to nature. (4.) To endure the greateſt of pains and torments to be with him. (5.) To caſt himſelf into the vaſt ocean of eternity, the moſt amazing change, to be with Chriſt. Oh the glorious conqueſts of love!

Infer. 2. *Then the apoſtacy of unregenerate profeſſors, in times of imminent danger, is not to be wondered at.* They will, and muſt warp from Chriſt, when their lives are in hazard for him. The love of the body will certainly prevail over their love to Chriſt and religion. *Amor meus pondus meum.* Self-love will now draw. Love is the weight of the ſoul, which inclines and determines it, in the competition of intereſts, and the predominant intereſt always carries it. Every unregenerate profeſſor

loves his own life more than Christ, prefers his body before his soul; such an one may, upon divers accounts, as education, example, flight convictions of conscience, or ostentation of gifts, fall into a profession of religion, and continue a long time in that profession, before he visibly recede from Christ; *hope* of the resurrection of the interest of religion in the world; *shame* of retracting his profession; *applause* of his zeal and constancy in higher trials, the peace of his own conscience, and many such motives, may prevail with a carnal professor to endure a while; but, when dangers of life come to an height, they are gone, Matth. xxiv. 8, 9, 10. And therefore our Lord tells us, that they "who hate not their lives, cannot be his disciples," Luke 12, 26. Now will they lose their lives by saving them, Matth. xvi. 25. and the reasons are plain and forcible: For,

1. Now is the proper season for the predominant love to be discovered, it can be hid no longer: and the love of life is the predominant love in all such persons; for do but compare it with their love to Christ, and it will easily be found so. They love their lives truly and really, they love Christ but feignedly and pretendedly; and the real will, and must prevail over the feigned love. They love their lives fervently and intensely, they love Christ but coldly and remissly: And the fervent love will prevail over the remiss love. Their love to their bodies hath a root in themselves, their love to Christ hath no root in themselves, Matth. xiii. 21. And that which hath a root must needs out-last and out-live that which hath none.

2. Because when life is in hazard, conscience will work in them by way of discouragement; it will hint the danger of their eternal state to them, and tell them they may cast away their souls for ever in a bravado; for though the cause they are called to suffer for be good, yet their condition is bad; and if the condition be not good as well as the cause, a man is lost for ever, though he suffer for it, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. Conscience, which encourages and supports the upright, will discourage and daunt the hypocrite, and tell him, he is not on the same terms in sufferings that other men are.

3. Because then all the springs by which their profession was fed and maintained, fail and dry up. Now the wind that was in their backs is come about, and blows a storm in their faces; there are no preferments nor honours now to be had from religion. These mens sufferings are a perfect surprize to them, for they never counted the cost, Luke xiv. 28. Now they must

ſtand alone, and reſiſt unto blood, and ſacrifice all viſibles for the viſibles; and this they can never do.

Oh therefore, profeſſors, look to your hearts, try their predominant love; compare your love to Chriſt with that to your lives. Now the like queſtion will be put to you, that once was put to Peter, John xxi. 15. "Loveſt thou me more than "theſe?" What ſay you to this? You think now, you do, but, alas your love is not yet brought to the fire to be tried: you think you hate ſin, but will you be able to ſtrive *unto* blood againſt ſin? Heb. xii. 4. Will you chuſe ſuffering rather than ſin? Job xxxvi. 21. O try your love to Chriſt, before God bring it to the trial. Sure I am, the love of life will make you warp in the hour of temptation; except,

1. You ſat down and counted the coſt of religion before-hand: if you ſet out in proceſſion only for a walk, not for a journey; if you go to ſea for recreation, not for a voyage; if you be mounted among other proceſſors, only to take the air, and not to engage an enemy in ſharp and bloody encounters, you are gone.

2. Except you live by faith, and not by ſenſe, 2 Cor. iv. 18. "Whilſt we look not at the things that are ſeen." You muſt balance preſent ſufferings with future glory. You muſt go by that account and reckoning, Rom. viii. 18. or you are gone. "Now the juſt ſhall live by faith;" and if faith do not ſupport, your fears will certainly ſink you.

3. Except you be ſincere and plain-hearted in religion, driving no deſign in it but to ſave your ſouls; you may ſee your lot in that example, 2 Tim. iv. 10. "Demas hath forſaken me." O take heed of a cunning, deceitful, double heart in religion; be plain, be open, care not if your ends lie open to the eyes of all the world.

4. Except you experience the power of religion in your own ſouls, as well as wear the name of it. O my brethren, it is not a name to live that will do you ſervice now. Many ſhips are gone down to the bottom, for all the brave names of the *Succeſs*, the *Proſperous*, the *Happy Return*, and ſo will you. There is a knowing of ourſelves by taſte and real experience, Heb. x. 34. which doth a ſoul more ſervice in a ſuffering hour, than all the ſplendid names and titles in the world.

5. Except you make it your daily work to crucify the fleſh, deny ſelf for Chriſt, in all the forms and intereſts of it. He that cannot deny himſelf, will deny Jeſus Chriſt, Matth. xvi. 24. "Let him deny himſelf, take up his croſs, and follow me," &c.

he cannot be my disciple. Ponder these things in your hearts, whilst yet God delays the trial.

Infer. 3. If the souls of men be naturally so strongly inclined and affected towards the body; *Then hence you may plainly see the wisdom of God in all the afflictions and burdens he lays upon his people in this world, and find that all is but enough to wean off their souls from their bodies, and make them willing to part with them.*

The life of the saints in this world, is generally a burdened and a groaning life; 2 Cor. v. 2. "In this tabernacle we groan, "being burdened." Here the saints feel, (1.) A burden of sin, Rom. vii. 24. this is a dead and a sinking weight. (2.) A burden of affliction; of this all are partakers, Heb. xii. though not all in an equal degree, or in the same kind, yet all have their burdens equal to, and even beyond their own strength to support it; 2 Cor. i. 8. "pressed above measure." (3.) A burden of inward troubles for sin, and outward troubles in the flesh both together, so had Job, Heman, David, and many of the saints.

Certainly this befals them not, (1.) Casually, Job v. 6. "It "rises not out of the dust:" (2.) Nor because God loves and regards them not, for they are fruits of his love; Heb. xii. 6. "Whom he loveth he correcteth:" (3.) Nor because he takes pleasure in our groans; Lam. iii. 34. "To tread under his feet "the prisoners of the earth,—the Lord hath no pleasure:" it is not for his own pleasure, but his childrens profit; Heb. xii. 10. And among the profits that result from these burdens, this is not the least, to make you less fond of the body than you would else be, and more willing to be gone to your everlasting rest. And certainly all the diseases and pains we endure in the body, whether they be upon inward or outward accounts, by passion or compassion from God or men, will be found but enough to wean us, and loose off our hearts from the fond love of life. Afflictions are bitter things to our taste, Ruth i. 20. so bitter, that Naomi thought a name of a contrary signification fitter for her afflicted condition; call me *Marah*, *i. e.* bitter, not *Naomi*, pleasant, beautiful. And the church, Lam. iii. 19. calls them wormwood and gall.

The great design of God in afflicting them, is the same that a tender mother projects in putting wormwood to her breast when she would wean the child.

It hath been observed by some discreet and grave ministers, that before their remove from one place to another, God hath

permitted and ordered some weaning providence to befal them; either denying wonted success to their labour, or alienating and cooling the affections of their people towards them, which not only makes the manner of their departure more easy, but the grounds of it more clear. Much so it falls out in our natural death, the comfort of the world is imbittered to us before we leave it; the longer we live in it, the less we shall like it. We overlive most of our comforts which engaged our hearts to it, that we may more freely take our leave of it. It were good for Christians to observe the voice of such providences as these, and answer the designs of them in a greater willingness to die.

1. Is thy body which was once hale and vigorous, now become a crazy, sickly, pained body to thee, neither useful to God, nor comfortable to thee? a tabernacle to groan and sigh in? and little hopes it will be recovered to a better temper; God hath ordained this to make thee willing to be divorced from it: the less desireable life is, the less formidable death will be.

2. Is thy estate decayed and blasted by providence, so that thy life which was once full of creature-comforts, is now filled with cares and anxieties? O it is a weaning providence to thee, and bespeaks thee the more chearfully to bid the world farewel. The less comfort it gives you, the less it shall entangle and engage you. We little know with what aking hearts, and pensive breasts, many of God's people walk up and down, though for religion, or reputation sake they put a good face upon it; but by these things, God is bespeaking and preparing them for a better state.

3. Is an husband, a wife, or dear children dead, and with them the comfort of life laid in the dust? why this the Lord sees necessary to do to persuade you to come after willingly? It is the cutting asunder thy roots in the earth, that thou mayest fall the more easily. O how many strokes must God give at our names, estates, relations, and health, before we will give way to the last stroke of death that fells us to the ground?

4. Do the times frown upon religion? Do all things seem to threaten stormy times at hand? Are desirable assemblies scattered? nothing but sorrows and sufferings to be expected in this world? by these things God will imbitter the earth, and sweeten heaven to his people.

5. Is the beauty and sweetness of Christian society defaced and decayed? That communion which was wont to be pithy, substantial, spiritual, and edifying, become either frothy or contentious, so that thy soul has no pleasure in it; this also is a

weaning providence to our souls; Strigelius desired to die that he might be freed *ab implacabilibus theologorum odiis*, from the wranglings and contentions that were in his time. Our fond affection to the body requires all this, and much more, to wean and mortify them.

Infer. 4. *How comfortable is the doctrine of the resurrection to believers, which assures them of receiving their bodies again, though they part with them for a time!*

Believers must die as well as others; their union with Christ privileges them not from a separation from their bodies, Rom. viii. 10. Heb. ix. 27. But yet they have special grounds of consolation against this doleful separation above all others. For,

1. Though they part with them, yet they part in hopes of receiving them again, 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14. They take not a final leave of them when they die. Husbandmen cast their seed-corn into the earth chearfully and willingly, because they part with it in hope; so should we when we commit our bodies to the earth at death.

2. Though death separates these dear friends from each other, yet it cannot separate either the one or other from Christ, Luke xx. 37, 38. "I am the God of Abraham," *&c.* Your very dust is the Lord's, and the grave rots not the bond of the covenant.

3. The very same body we lay down at death, we shall assume again at the resurrection; not only the same specifical, but the same numerical body; Job xix. 25, 26. "With these eyes shall "I see God."

4. The unbodied soul shall not find the want of its body, so as to afflict or disquiet it; nor the body the want of its soul; but the one shall be at rest in heaven, and the other sweet asleep in the grave; and all that long interval shall slide away without any afflicting sense of each others absence. The time will be long, Job. xiv. 12. but if it were longer, it cannot be afflicting, considering, how the soul is cloathed immediately, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. and how the body sleeps sweetly in Jesus, 1 Thess. iv. 14.

5. When the day of their re-espousals is come, the soul will find the body so transformed and improved, that it shall never receive prejudice from it any more, but a singular addition to its happiness and glory. Now it clogs us: Mat. xxvi. 41. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." It encumbers us with cares to provide for it, and eats up time and thoughts; but then it will be a spiritual body, 1 Cor. xv. 43. like to the angels for manner of subsistence, Luke xx. 35, 36. 2 Cor. vi. 13. and, which is the highest step of glory, like unto Christ's glorious body, Phil. iii. 21. Well therefore might the

Father say, *Resurrectio mortuorum est consolatio Christianorum*: the resurrection of the dead is the consolation of Christians.

Use second, of reproof.

In the next place, let me press you to regulate your love to your bodies, by the rules of religion and right reason: I must press you to love them, though nature itself teacheth you so to do; but I press you to love them as Christians, as men that understand the right use and improvement of their bodies. There are two sorts of errors in our love to the body, one in defect, the other in excess; both come fitly here to be censured and healed.

First, Some offend in the defect of love to their own bodies, who use them as if they had no love for them, whose souls act as if they were enemies to their own bodies: they do not formally and directly hate them, but consequentially and eventually they may be said to hate them, and that,

(1.) By defiling them with filthy lusts; so the apostle speaks, 1 Cor. vi. 18. "Every sin that a man doth, is without the body, but he that committeth adultery sinneth against his own "body:" In other sins it is the instrument, but here it is both instrument and object; not only God, but your own bodies are abused, and wronged by it. The body may be considered two ways, Either,

1. As our vessel; or
2. As the Spirit's temple.

1. As our vessel or instrument for natural and spiritual uses and services: and on that account we should not injure or defile it, 1 Thess. iv. 4, 5. but possess it in sanctification and honour. The lusts of uncleanness, gluttony, and drunkenness, quench the vigour, blast the beauty, and destroy the health and honour of the body; and so render it both naturally and morally unfit for the service and use of the soul.

2. And the injury is yet greater, if we consider it as the Spirit's temple. On this ground the apostle strongly convinceth, and dissuadeth Christians from these abuses of the body, 1 Cor. vi. 15, 16. He argues from the dignity God will put upon our bodies by the resurrection, ver. 13, 14. They are to be transformed, and made like unto Christ's glorious body; and from the honour he has already put upon the bodies of the saints in their union with Christ, ver. 15, 16. They, as well as the soul, are ingrafted into him, and joined with him; they are his temples, to be dedicated, hallowed, and consecrated to his service. O let them not be made a sink for lusts, or mere strainers for meat and drink.

(2.) By macerating them with covetous lusts, denying them their due comforts and refreshments, and unmercifully burdening them with labours and sorrows about things that perish. (1.) Some deny their bodies due comforts and refreshments, which the natural and positive laws of God both allow and command. Their souls are cruel step-mothers to their bodies, and keep them too short; not out of a prudent and Christian design to starve their lusts, but to advance their estates. Of this Solomon speaks, Eccl. vi. 22. "There is an evil which I have seen "under the sun, and it is common among men; A man to whom "God hath given riches, wealth and honour, so that he want-"eth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth; yet God giv-"eth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it. "This is vanity, and it is an evil disease." *Tenacity* is a disease of the soul, like that of a *dyscrasy* in the stomach, which so indisposeth it that it cannot receive with any appetite or delight the best refreshments at a plentiful table. (2.) And others there are that wrong and abuse their own bodies, by laying unreasonable and unmerciful loads upon them, especially loads of grief and sorrow, wasting and weakening them beyond all rules of reason or religion. If a friend or relation die, they have less mercy on their own bodies than a conscientious man hath on the horse he rides. Cares and sorrows are as deadly to the body as a sword; 1 Tim. vi. 10. Intense and immoderate griefs about worldly losses and crosses have slain their ten thousands; and, which is strange, the soul seems to take a certain kind of pleasure in loading and tormenting the body. There is a real truth in that strange expression of * Seneca, "Sorrow itself hath a "certain kind of pleasure attending it."

The souls of some mourners do willingly excite and provoke their own grief, when they begin to abate, which is like the whetting of the knife that grows dull, to make it cut the deeper into the body. Thus, as † Seneca observes, "some pa-"rents that have lost their beloved children, willingly call to "mind their pleasant sayings, and pretty actions to find a kind "of pleasure in a fresh shower of tears for them;" when, poor hearts! Sorrow hath so broken them already, that they need consolations under their present sorrows, rather than irritations of new ones. And the soul's unmercifulness to the body, is in such causes farther discovered by its obstinate refusal of all that

* *Inest quiddam dulce tristitiæ.* Ep. 806.

† *Cum occurrant sermones eorum jucundi, conversatio blanda, officiosa pietas: tunc oculi velut in gaudia relaxantur.* Id. ib.

is comforting and relieving. So it is said of Rachel, Jer. xxxi. 15. "Rachel weeping for her children, would not be comforted, "because they were not." So the Israelites hearkened not unto Moses, because of the anguish of spirit, and the cruel bondage, Exod. vi. 9. Thus we studiously rake together and exasperate whatsoever is piercing, wounding, and overwhelming; and shut our ears to all that is relieving and suporting, which is cruelty to our own bodies, and that which hath so far broken the health and strength of some bodies, that they are never like to be useful instruments to the soul any more in this world; such deep and desperate wounds have their own souls given them by immoderate grief, as will never be perfectly healed, but by the resurrection. Of those wounds the body may say, as it is Zech. xiii. 6. These are the wounds "with which I was wounded in the "house (or by the hand) of my friend;" thus my own soul hath dealt cruelly and unmercifully with me.

Secondly, Others offend in the excess and extravagancy of their love to the body, and these are a hundred to one in number with those that sin in defect of love. My friends, upon a due search, it will be found, that the love of our souls generally degenerates into fondness and folly: there is but little well-tempered and ordinary love found among men. We make fondlings, yea, we make idols of our bodies; we rob God, yea, our own souls, to give to the body. It is not a natural and kindly heat of love, but a mere feverish heat, which preys upon the very spirits of religion, which is found with many of us. The feverish distemper may be discovered, by the beating of our pulse, in three or four particulars.

(1.) This appears by our sinful indulgence to our whinning appetites. We give the flesh whatsoever it craves, and can deny it nothing it desires; pampering the body, to the great injury and hazard of the soul. Some have their conversation in the lusts of the flesh, as it is, Eph. ii. 3. trading only in those things that please and pamper the flesh: "They sow to the "flesh," Gal. vi. 8. *i. e.* all their studies and labours are but the *sowing of the seeds of pleasure to the flesh.* Not a handful of spiritual seed sown in prayer for the soul all the day long: what the body craves, the obsequious soul, like a slave, is at its beck to give it; Tit. iii. 3. "Serving divers lusts and pleasures;" attending to every knock and call, to fulfil the desires of the flesh. O how little do these men understand the life of religion, or the great design of Christianity! which consists in mortifying, and not pampering and gratifying the body, Rom. xiv. 13, 14. And according to that rule, all serious Christians or-

der their bodies, giving them what is needful to keep them serviceable and useful to the soul, but not gratifying their irregular desires; giving what their wants, not what their wantonness calls for. So Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 27. "I beat it down, and "keep it under;" he understood it as his servant, not his master; He knew that Hagar would quickly perk up, and domineer over Sarah, expect more attendance than the soul, except it were kept under: these two verbs, ὑπωπιάζω and δελαγωγω, are very emphatical; the former signifies to make it black and blue with buffeting, the other to bring it under by checks and rebukes, as masters that understand their place and authority use to do with insolent and wanton servants.

It was a rare expression of a Heathen, *Major sum, et ad majora natus, quam ut corporis mei sim mancipium;* I am greater, and born to greater things, than that I should be a slave to my body. And it was the saying of a pious divine, when he felt the flesh rebellious and wanton, *Ego faciam, asselle, ut ne calcitres;* I will make thee, thou ass, that thou shalt not kick. I know the superstitious Papists place much of religion in these external things, but though they abuse them to an ill purpose, there is a necessary and lawful use of these abridgments and restraints upon the body; and it will be impossible to mortify and starve our lusts without a due rigour and severity to our flesh. But how little are many acquainted with these things? They deal with their bodies as David with Adonijah, of whom it is said, 1 Kings i. 6. His father had not displeased him at any time, in saying, Why hast thou done so? And just so our flesh requites us, by its rebellions and treasons against the soul; it seeks the life of the soul, which seeks nothing more than its content and pleasure: this is not ordinate love, but fondness and folly, and what we shall bitterly repent for at last.

(2.) It appears by our sparing and favouring of them, in the necessary uses and services we have for them in religion. Many will rather starve their souls, than work and exercise their bodies, or disturb their sluggish rest: thus the idle excuses and pretences of endangering our health, oftentimes put by the duties of religion, or at least lose the fittest and propereſt season for them: we are lazying upon our beds, when we should be wrestling upon our knees: the world is suffered to get the start of religion in the morning, and so religion is never able to overtake it all the day long. This was none of David's course, he prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried, Psal. cxix. 147. and Psal. v. 3. "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning,

"O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, "and will look up." And indeed we should consecrate unto God the freshest and fittest parts of our time, when our bodily senses are most vigorous; and we would do so, (except God by his providence disable us), were our hearts fully set for God, and religion lay with weight upon our spirits.

Some I confess, cannot receive this injunction, being naturally disabled by prevailing infirmities; but those that can, ought to do so. But O how many slothful excuses doth the flesh invent to put off duty! We shall injure our health, *&c.* O the hypocrisy of such pleas! If profit or pleasure calls us up, we have no shifts, but can rise early, and sit up late.

O friends, why hath God given you bodies, if not to waste and wear them out in his service, and the service of your own souls! If your bodies must not be put to it, and exercised this way, where is the mercy of having a body? If a stately horse were given you on this condition, that you must not ride or work him, what benefit would such a gift be to you? Your bodies must and will wear out, and it is better to wear them with working, than with rusting: we are generally more solicitous to live long, than to live usefully and serviceably; and it may be our health had been more precious in the eyes of God, if it had been less precious in our own eyes. It is just with God to destroy that health with diseases, which he sees we would cast away in slothfulness and idleness. Think with thyself, had such a soul as Timothy's or Gaius's been blest with such a body as thine, so strong and vigorous, so apt and able for service, they would have honoured God more in it in a day, than perhaps you do in a year. Certainly this is not love, but laziness; not a due improvement, but a sinful neglect and abuse of the body, to let it rust out into idleness, which might be employed so many ways for God, for your own and others souls. Well, remember death will shortly dissolve them, and then they can be of no more use; and if you expect God should put glory and honour upon them at the resurrection, use them for God now, with a faithful self-denying diligence.

(3.) It appears by our cowardly shrinking from dangers that threaten them, when the glory of God, our own and others salvation, bid us expose and not regard them. Some there are, that rather than they will adventure their flesh to the rage of man, will hazard their souls to the wrath of God *. They are

* Here the soul receives a deadly wound upon itself, to ward it off from the body. So did Spira.

so tender to suffer pain or restraint for Christ, but consider not what sufferings are prepared for the fearful and unbelieving in the world to come, Rev. xxi. 8. How many sad examples do the church-histories of antient and latter times afford us, of men, who consulting with flesh and blood in time of danger, have, in pity to their bodies, ruined their souls!

There be but few like-minded with Paul, who set a low price upon his liberty or life for Christ, Acts xx. 24. or with those worthy Jews, Dan. iii. 28. who yielded their bodies to preserve their consciences. Few of Chrysostom's mind, who told the empress, *Nil nisi peccatum timeo*, I fear nothing but sin; or of Basil's, who told the emperor, God threatned hell, whereas he threatned but a prison. That is a remarkable rule that Christ gives us, Mat. x. 28. The sum of it is, to set God against man, the soul against the body, and hell against temporal sufferings; and so surmounting these low fleshly considerations, to cleave to our duty in the face of dangers. You read, Gal. i. 16. how in pursuit of duty, though surrounded with danger, Paul would not confer, or *consult with flesh and blood, i. e.* ask its opinion which were best, or stay for its consent, till it were willing to suffer; he understood not that the flesh had any voice at the council-table in his soul, but willing or unwilling, if duty call for it, he was resolved to hazard it for God.

We have a great many little politicians among us, who think to husband their lives and liberties a great deal better than other plain-hearted, and too forward Christians do: but these politics will be their perdition, and their craft will betray them to ruin. They will lose their lives by saving them, when others will save them by losing them, Matth. x. 39. For the interest of the body depends on, and follows the safety of the soul, as the cabin doth the ship.

O my friends, let me beg you not to love your bodies into hell, and your souls too for their sakes: be not so scared at the sufferings of the body, as, with poor Spira, to dash them both against the wrath of the great and terrible God. Most of those souls that are now in hell, are there upon the account of their indulgence to the flesh, they could not deny the flesh, and now are denied by God. They could not suffer from men, and now must suffer the vengeance of eternal fire.

(4.) In a word; it appears we love them fondly and irregularly, in that we cannot with any patience think of death and separation from them. How do some men fright at the very name of death! And no arguments can persuade them seriously

to think of an unbodied, and ſeparated ſtate. It is as death to them, to bring their thoughts cloſe to that ungrateful ſubject. A Chriſtian that loves his body regularly and moderately, can look into his own grave with a compoſed mind, and ſpeak familiarly of it, as Job xvii. 14. And Peter ſpeaks of the putting off of his body by death; as a man would of the putting off of his cloaths at night, 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. And certainly ſuch men have a great advantage above all others, both as to the tranquillity of their life and death. You know a parting time muſt come, and the more fond you are of them, the more bitter and doleful that time will be. Nothing, except the guilt and terrible charges of conſcience, put men into terrors at death, more than our fondneſs of the body. I do confeſs, chriſtleſs perſons have a great deal of reaſon to be ſhy of death; their dying day is their undoing day: but for Chriſtians to ſtartle and fright at it, is ſtrange, conſidering how great a friend death will be to them that are in Chriſt. What are you afraid of? What, to go to Chriſt? to be freed of ſin and affliction too ſoon? Certainly this hath not been ſo comfortable a habitation to you, that you ſhould be loth to change it for a heavenly one.

Uſe third, of exhortation.

To conclude; Seeing there is ſo ſtrict a friendſhip and tender affection betwixt ſoul and body, let me perſuade every ſoul of you to expreſs your love to the body, by labouring to get union with Jeſus Chriſt, and thereby to prevent the utter ruin of both to all eternity.

Souls, if you love yourſelves, or the bodies you dwell in, ſhew it by your preventing care in ſeaſon, leſt they be caſt away for ever. How can you ſay you love them, when you daily expoſe them to the everlaſting wrath of God, by employing them as weapons of unrighteouſneſs, to fight againſt him that formed them? You feed and pamper them on earth, you give them all the delight and pleaſures you can procure for them in this world; but you take no care what ſhall become of them, nor your ſouls neither, after death hath ſeparated them. Oh cruel ſouls! cruel, not to others, but to yourſelves, and to your own fleſh, which you pretend ſo much love to! Is this your love to your bodies? What, to employ them in Satan's ſervice on earth, and then to be caſt as a prey to him for ever in hell? You think the rigour and mortification of the ſaints, their abſtemiouſneſs and ſelf-denial, their cares, fears, and diligence, to be too great ſeverity to their bodies: but they know theſe are the moſt real evidences of their true love to them; they love them too well to caſt them away as you do. Alas! your love to the body doth

not consist in feeding, and cloathing, and pleasing it; but in getting it united to Christ, and made the *temple of the Holy Ghost*: in using it for God, and dedicating it to God.

I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies living sacrifices to God, which is your reasonable service, Rom. xii. 1. The soul should look upon the body as a wise parent upon a rebellious or wanton child, that would, if left to itself, quickly bring itself to the gallows; the father looks on him with compassion and melting bowels, and saith, with the rod in his hand, and tears in his eyes, "My child, my "naughty, disobedient, headstrong child, I resolve to chastise "thee severely, I love thee too well to suffer thee to be ruin-"ed, if my care or correction may prevent it." So should our souls evidence their love to, and care over their own rebellious flesh. It is cruelty, not love or pity, to indulge them to their own destruction.

Except you have gracious souls, you shall never have glorified bodies: except your souls be united with Christ, the happiness of your bodies as well as your souls, is lost to all eternity. Know you not that the everlasting condition of your bodies follows, and depends on the interest your souls now get in Christ? Oh that this sad truth might sink deep into all our considerations this day; that if your bodies be snares to your souls, and your souls be now regardless of the future state of themselves, and them; assuredly they will have a bitter parting at death, a terrible meeting again at the resurrection, and horrid reflections upon each other, naturally charging their ruin upon each other to all eternity. Whilst they that are in Christ, part in hope, meet with joy, and bless God for each other for evermore.

* *

2 PET. i. 13, 14. *Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance. Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.*

AT the tenth verse of this chapter, the apostle sums up his foregoing precepts and exhortations in one great and most important duty, the "making sure of their calling and e-"lection." This exhortation he enforceth on them by a most solemn and weighty motive, ver. 11. "Even an abundant en-"trance into the everlasting kingdom." No work of greater

necessity or difficulty, than to make sure our salvation, no argument more forcible and prevalent, than an easy and free entrance into glory at death, an εὐθανασία, a sweet and comfortable dissolution, to enter the port of glory before the wind, with our full lading of comfort, peace, and joy in believing, our sails full, and our streamers flying: Oh! how much better is this, than to ly wind-bound, I mean heart-bound, at the harbour's mouth! tossed up and down with fears, doubts, and manifold temptations, making many a board to fetch the harbour; for so much is signified in his figurative and allusive expression, ver. 11.

And for their encouragement in this great and difficult work, he engageth himself by promise to give them all the assistance he can, whilst God should continue his life; and knowing that would be but a little while, he resolves to use his utmost endeavour to secure these things in their memories after his death, that they might not die with him. This is the general scope and order of the words.

Wherein more particularly we have,

1. His exemplary industry and diligence in his ministerial work.

2. The consideration stimulating and provoking him thereunto.

1. His exemplary industry and diligence in his ministerial work. In which two things are remarkable, *viz.* (1.) The quality of his work, which was * *to stir them up, by putting them in remembrance*, to keep the heavenly flame of love and zeal lively upon the altar of their hearts. He well knew what a sleepy disease the best Christians are troubled with, and therefore he had need to be stirring them up, and awaking them to their duty. (2.) The constancy of his work: *as long as I am in this tabernacle; i. e.* as long as I live in this world. The body is here called a tabernacle, in respect of its moveableness and frailty, and in opposition to that house made without hands, *eternal in the heavens.* And it is observable how he limits and bounds his serviceableness to them, by his commoration in his tabernacle or body, as well knowing after death he could be no longer useful to them or any others in this world. Death puts an end to all our ministerial usefulness: but till that time he judged it meet, and becoming him, to be aiding and assisting their faith: our life and labour must end together.

2. We have here the motive, or consideration, stimulating and

* Διεγειραι, signifies to raise up, or awake, *i. e.* your minds, which are, as it were, sleepy or slumbering, and dull, &c. *Pool's Synopsis.*

provoking him to this diligence; "knowing that I must shortly put off this tabernacle, even as the Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me." In which words he gives an account of, (1.) The speediness; (2.) necessity; (3.) voluntariness of his death, and the way and means by which he knew it. All these must be considered singly and apart, and then valued all together, as they amount to a weighty argument or motive to excite him to diligence in his duty.

(1.) He reflects upon the speediness or near approach of his death. "I must [† shortly] put off this my tabernacle;" which is a form of speech of the same importance with that of Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 6. "The time of my departure is at hand," my time in the body is almost at an end.

(2.) The necessity of his death: It is not I *may*, but I *must* put off this my tabernacle; yea, I must put it off shortly; for so the Lord hath shewed him: Christ had signified it expressly to him, John xxi. 18, 19. And beside this, most expositors think this clause refers to some special vision or revelation which Peter had of the time and manner of his own death: so that besides the natural necessity, or the inevitableness of his death by the law of nature, he was certified of it by special revelation. We have here also,

(3.) The voluntariness of his death; for voluntariness is consistent enough with the necessity of the event. I must put off, or lay down my tabernacle; he saith not, I must be torn, or rent by violence from it, but I must *depose*, or *lay it down*. ‡ Camero will have the word here used for death, properly to signify the laying down of one's garments: he made no more of putting off his body than his garment.

Upon the consideration of the whole matter, the speediness of his death which he knew to be at hand; the necessity of it, that when it came he must be gone from, and could be no more useful to them; and his own inclination to be with Christ in a better state, being as willing to be gone, as a weary traveller to be at home; he judged it meet, or becoming him, as he was called of Christ to feed his sheep, as he was gifted extraordina-

† Ταχιν *brevi futurum*. Every Christian knows not the time of his death, as Peter did by special revelation.——But though we know it not by a word spoken to us in particular, we know it by a word written for all in common, Eccl. ix. 5. "The living know that they must die."

‡ He calls it a putting off or laying down, thereby signifying his willingness to die for Christ. *Pool.*

rily for the church's ſervice, full of ſpiritual excellencies, all which in a ſhort time would be taken away from them by death: I ſay, upon all theſe accounts, he could not but judge it meet to be ſtirring them up, and every way ſtriving to be as uſeful as he could. Hence the note will be,

Doct. *How ſtrong ſoever the affections and inclinations of ſouls are to the fleſhly tabernacles they now live in, yet they muſt put them off, and that ſpeedily.*

(1.) *The certainty of death*, Job xvi. 22.

The point lies very plain before us in the ſcriptures. That is a remarkable expreſſion we have in Job xvi. 22. "When a few years "are come, I ſhall go the way whence I ſhall "not return." In the Hebrew it is, ‖ "When "the years of number, or my numbred years are come; years "ſo numbred, that they are circumſcribed in a very ſhort period "of time." When thoſe few years are paſt, then I muſt go to my long home, my everlaſting abode, never more to return to this world: "The way whence I ſhall not return;" elſewhere called "the way of all fleſh," Joſh. xxiii. 15. and "the way of "all the earth," 1 Kings ii. 2.

"There is no man that hath power over the ſpirit to retain "the ſpirit; neither hath he power in the day of death, and "there is no diſcharge in that war," Eccl. viii. 8. By ſpirit underſtand the natural ſpirit, or breath of life, which, as I ſhewed before, connects or ties the ſoul and body together. This ſpirit no man can retain in the day of death. *We can* (as one ſpeaks) *as well ſtop the chariot of the ſun when poſting to night, and chaſe away the ſhadows of the evening, as eſcape this hour of darkneſs that is coming upon us* *. A man may eſcape the wars by pleading privilege of years, or weakneſs of body, or the king's protection, or by ſending another in his room; but in this war the preſs is ſo ſtrict, that it admits no diſpenſation; young or old, weak or ſtrong, willing or unwilling, all is one, into the field we muſt go, and look that laſt and moſt dreadful enemy in the face. It is in vain to think of ſending another in our room, for no man dieth by proxy; or to think of compounding with death, as thoſe ſelf-deluded fools did, Iſa. xxviii. 15. who thought they had been diſcharged of the debt by ſeeing the ſerjeant: No, no: there is no diſcharge in that war. *Nihil prodeſt ora concludere, et vitam*

‖ *Annî numeri* (i. e.) *qui numerati ſunt adeo ut breviſſimi periodo circumſcripti.*

* No diligence avoids, no happineſs ſubdues, and no power overcomes death, ſays Seneca.

fugientem retinere, ſaith Hierom on that text: Let us ſhut our mouths never ſo cloſe, ſtruggle againſt death never ſo hard, there is no more retaining the ſpirit, than a woman can retain the fruit of her womb, when the full time of her deliverance is come. Suppoſe a man were ſitting upon a throne of majeſty, ſurrounded with armed guards, or in the midſt of a college of expert and learned phyſicians, death will paſs all theſe guards to deliver thee the fatal meſſage: Neither can arts help thee, when nature itſelf gives thee up.

The law of mortality binds all, good and bad, young and old, the moſt uſeful and deſirable ſaints, whom the world can worſt ſpare, as well as uſeleſs and undeſirable ſinners, Rom. viii. 10. "And if Chriſt (or though Chriſt) be in you, the body is dead "becauſe of ſin." Peter himſelf muſt put off his tabernacle, for they are but tabernacles, frail and moveable frames, not built for continuance; theſe will drop off from our ſouls, as the ſhells fall off from the bird in the neſt; be our earthly tabernacles never ſo ſtrong or pleaſant, we muſt depoſe them, and that ſhortly; our leaſe in them will quickly expire, we have but a ſhort term. James iv. 14. like a thin miſt in the morning, which the ſun preſently diſſipates; this is a metaphor choſen from the air: You have one from the land, where the ſwift poſt runs, Job ix. 25. So doth our life from ſtage to ſtage, till its journey be finiſhed; and a third from the waters, there ſail the ſwift ſhips, Job ix. 26. which weighing anchor, and putting into the ſea, continually leſſen the land, till at laſt they have quite loſt ſight of it: from the fire, Pſal. lviii. 4. The lives of men are as ſoon extinct as a blaze made with dry thorns, which is almoſt as ſoon out as in. Thus you ſee how the Spirit of God hath borrowed metaphors from all the elements of nature, to ſhadow forth the brevity, and frailty of that life we now live in theſe tabernacles: ſo that we may ſay as one did before us, *Neſcio an dicenda ſit vita mortalis, an vitalis mors*; I know not which to call it, a mortal life, or a living death.

(2.) *The ſpeedineſs of death. The ſcriptures borrow metaphors from all the elements to this purpoſe.*

The continuance of theſe our tabernacles or bodies is ſhort, whether we conſider them *abſolutely*, or *comparatively*.

1. *Abſolutely*. If they ſhould ſtand 70 or 80 years, which is the longeſt duration, Pſal. xc. 10. how ſoon will that time run out? What are years that are paſt but as a dream that is vaniſhed, or as the waters that are paſt away? it is *in fluxu conti-*

nuo: there is no ſtopping its ſwift courſe, or calling back a moment that is paſt. Death ſet out in its journey towards us the ſame hour we were born, and how near is it come this day to many of us? It hath us in chaſe, and will quickly fetch us up, and overtake us; but few ſtand ſo long as the utmoſt date.

2. *Comparatively.* Let us compare our time in theſe tabernacles, (1.) either with eternity, or with him who inhabits it, and it ſhrinks up into nothing; Pſal. xxxix. 5. "Mine age is "nothing unto thee." So vaſt is the diſproportion, that it ſeems not only little, but nothing at all. Or (2.) with the duration of the bodies of men in the firſt ages of the world, when they lived many hundred years in theſe fleſhly tabernacles. The length of their life was the benefit of the world, becauſe religion was then *απαλροπαραδοτον*, a thing handed down from father to ſon; but certainly it would be no benefit to us that are in Chriſt, to be ſo long ſuſpended the fruition of God in the everlaſting reſt.

The grounds and reaſons of this neceſſity that lies upon all, to put off their earthly tabernacles ſo ſoon, are

1. The law of God, or his appointment.
2. The providence of God ordering it ſuitable to this appointment.

1. The law or appointment of God which came in force immediately upon the fall; Gen. ii. 17. "In the day that thou "eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die." And accordingly it took place upon all mankind immediately upon the firſt tranſgreſſion, Rom. v. 12. *Death entred by ſin.* The threatning was not his immediate, actual, perſonal death in the day that he ſhould eat, but a ſtate of mortality to commence from that time to him and his poſterity; hence it is ſaid, Heb. ix. 27. "It is appointed to "all men once to die."

2. The providence of God ordering and framing the body of man ſuitably to this his appointment; * a frail, weak creature, having the ſeeds of death in his conſtitution: Thouſands of diſeaſes and infirmities are bred in his nature, and the ſmalleſt pore in his body is a door large enough to let in death. Hence his body is compared to a piece of cloth which moths have fretted, Pſal. xxxix. 11. it is become a ſorry rotten thing which

* We die daily, for ſome part of life is taken away daily, and then alſo when we increaſe, life decreaſes, for firſt we loſe infancy, then youth, even to yeſterday. Whatever part of time paſſes is loſt.

cannot long hang together. And indeed it is a wonder it continues ſo long as it doth.

And both theſe, *viz.* the divine appointment and providence, are in purſuance of a double deſign, or for the payment of a two-fold debt, which God owes to the firſt and to the ſecond Adam.

(1.) By cutting off the life, or diſſolving the tabernacles of wicked men, God pays that debt of juſtice owing to the firſt Adam's ſinful poſterity, whoſe ſins cry daily to his juſtice to cut them off. Rom. vi. 23. "The wages of ſin is death." And indeed it is admirable that his patience ſuffers ungodly men to live ſo long as they do, for he endures with much long-ſuffering, Rom. ix. 22. He ſees all their ſins, he is grieved at the heart with them; his forbearance doth but encourage them the more to ſin againſt him; Eccl. viii. 11. "Becauſe ſentence," *&c.* yet forbears: "Forty years long was I grieved with this generati-"on," Pſal. xcv. 10. And it is wonderful that he hath ſo much patience under ſuch a load. Habbakkuk admired it, Hab. i. 13. "Thou art of purer eyes," *&c.* Yet he ſuffers them to ſpend laviſhly upon his patience from year to year, but juſtice muſt do its office at laſt.

(2.) By cutting off the lives of good men, God pays to Chriſt the reward of his ſufferings, the end of his death, which was to bring many ſons to glory, Heb. ii. 10. Alas! it anſwers not Chriſt's end and intention in dying, to have his people ſo remote from him; John xvii. 24. "He would have them where "he is, that they might behold his glory." Two vehement deſires are ſatisfied by this appointment of God, and its execution, *viz.*

1. Chriſt's.
2. The ſaints.

1. Chriſt's deſires are ſatisfied; for this is the thing he all along kept his eye upon in the whole work of his mediation; it was to bring us to God, 1 Pet. iii. 18. Tho' he be in glory, yet his myſtical body is not full till all the elect be gathered in by converſion, and gathered home by glorification, Eph. i. 23. The church is his fulneſs. He is not fully ſatisfied till he ſee his ſeed, the ſouls he died for, ſafe in heaven; and then the debt due to him for all his ſufferings is fully paid him, Iſa. liii. 11. He ſees the travail of his ſoul. As it is the greateſt ſatisfaction, and pleaſure a man is capable of in this world, to ſee a great deſign, which hath been long projecting and managing, at laſt, by an orderly conduct, brought to its perfection.

2. The deſires of the ſaints are hereby ſatisfied, and their

weary souls brought to rest. Oh! what do gracious souls more pant after than the full enjoyment of God, and the visions of his face! the state of freedom from sin, and complete conformity to Jesus Christ! From the day of their espousals to Christ, these desires have been working in their souls. Love and patience have each acted its part in them, 2 Thess. iii. 5. Love hath put them into an holy ardor and longing to be with Christ: patience hath qualified and allayed those desires, and supported the soul under the delay. Love cries, Come, Lord, come; patience commands us to wait the appointed time. This appointed time, on which so great hopes and expectations depend, is the time of dissolving these tabernacles; for till then the soul's rest is suspended; and if it were perfectly freed from all other loads and burdens, both of sin and affliction, yet its very absence from Christ would alone make it restless: for it is with the soul in the body, as is with any other creature that is off its centre, it doth and must gravitate and propend, it is still moving and inclining farther, and feels not itself easy and at rest where it is, be its condition in other respects never so easy. 2 Cor. v. 6. "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent "from the Lord." You have a little shadow, or emblem of this in other creatures: You see the rivers, though they glide never so sweetly betwixt the fragrant banks of the most pleasant meadows in their course and passage, yet on they go towards the sea; and if they meet with never so many rocks or hills to resist their course, they will either strive to get a passage through them, or if that may not be, they will fetch a compass, and creep about them, and nothing can stop them till by a central force they have finished their weary course, and poured themselves into the bosom of the ocean. Or as it is with yourselves, when abroad from your habitations and relations: this may be pleasing a little while; but if every day might be a festival, it would not long please you, because you are not at home.

The main motives that persuade gracious souls to abide here, are to finish the work of their own salvation, and farther other mens; but as their evidences for heaven grow clearer to themselves, and their capacity of service less to others, so must their desires to be with Christ be more and more inflamed.

Now the case so standing, that Christ's condition in heaven, being a condition of desire and longing for the enjoyment of his people there, and all the glory of heaven would not content him without that; and the condition of his people on earth, being also a state of longing, groaning and panting to be with him, and all the pleasures and delights and comforts they have on earth,

ſill not content them without it: How wiſe and gracious an appointment of heaven is it, that theſe our tabernacles ſhall and muſt be put off, and that ſhortly! For hereby a full and mutual ſatisfaction is given to the reſtleſs deſires both of Chriſt's heart and of theirs: See the reflected flames of love betwixt them, in Rev. xxii. "The ſpirit and the bride ſay, Come. And let him "that is athirſt come; Behold, I come quickly. Even ſo, Lord "Jeſus; Come quickly." Delays make the heart ſad, Prov. xiii. 12. ſhould our commoration on earth be long, our patience had need be much greater than it is; but under all our burdens here, this is our relief, it is but a little while, and all will be well, as well as our ſouls can deſire to have it.

Infer. 1. Muſt we put off theſe tabernacles? Is death neceſſary and inevitable? *Then it is our wiſdom to ſweeten to ourſelves that cup which we muſt drink; and make that as pleaſant to us, as we can, which we know cannot be avoided.* Die we muſt, whether we be fit, or unfit, willing, or unwilling: It is to no purpoſe to ſhrug at the name, or ſhrink back from the thing. In all ages of the world, death hath ſwept the ſtage clean of one generation, to make room for another, and ſo it will from age to age, till the ſtage be taken down, in the general diſſolution.

But though death be inevitable by all, it is not alike evil, bitter, and dreadful to all. Some tremble, others triumph, at the appearance of it. Some meet it half way, receive it as a friend, and can bid it welcome, and die by conſent; making that the matter of their election, which, in itſelf, is neceſſary and unavoidable; ſo did Paul, Phil. i. 23. But others are drawn, or rent by plain violence from the body, Job xxvii. 8. when God draws out their ſouls.

That man is happy indeed, whoſe heart falls in with the appointment of God, ſo voluntarily and freely, as that he dare not only look death in the face with confidence, but go along with it by conſent of will. Remarkable to this purpoſe, is that which the apoſtle aſſerts of the frame of his own heart, 2 Cor. v. 8. "We are confident, I ſay, and willing rather to be ab-"ſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord." Here is both confidence and complacence, with reſpect to death, θαῤῥοῦμεν. The word ſignifies courage, fortitude; or, if you will, an undaunted boldneſs, and preſence of mind, when we look the king of terrors in the face. We dare venture upon death, we dare take it by the cold hand, and bid it welcome. We dare defy its enmity, and deride its noxious power, 1 Cor. xv. 55. "O death! where is thy ſting!" And that is not all, we have complacence in it, as well as confidence to

encounter it. Ευδοκουμεν, *we are willing*; the translation is too flat, *We are well pleased;* it is a desirable, a grateful thing to us, to die; but yet not in an absolute, but comparative consideration, ευδοκουμεν μαλλον, *we are willing rather, i. e.* rather than not see, and enjoy our Lord Jesus Christ; rather than to be here always sinning, and groaning. There is no complacency in death; in itself it is not desireable. But if we must go through that strait gate, or not see God; we are willing rather to be absent from the body. So that you see death was not the matter of his submission only, he did not yield to what he could not avoid, but he ballances the evils of death, with the privileges it admits the soul into, and then pronounces, ευδοκουμεν, we are content, yea, pleased to die.

We cannot live always if we would, and our hearts should be wrought to that frame, as to say, we would not live always if we could, Job vii. 16. "I would not live always," or *long*, saith he. But why should Job deprecate that which was not attainable? "I would not live always;" he needed not *to* trouble himself about that, it being impossible that he should: both statute and natural law forbid it. Ay, but this is his sense: supposing no such necessity as there is, if it were pure matter of election; upon a due ballancing of accounts, and comparing the good and evil of death, I would not be confined always, or for any long time to the body. It would be a bondage unsupportable to be here always.

Indeed those that have their portion, their all, in this life, have no desire to be gone hence. They that were never changed by grace, desire no change by death; if such a concession were made to them, as was once to an English parliament, That they should never be dissolved, but by their own consent, when would they say as Paul, "I desire to be dissolved?" But it is far otherwise with them, whose portion and affections are in another world; they would not live always if they might; knowing, that never to die, is never to be happy.

Quest. If you say, *This is an excellent, and most desirable temper of soul; but how did these holy men attain it? or what is the course we may take to get the like frame of willingness?*

Sol. They attained it, and you may attain it in such methods as these.

1. They lived in the believing views of the invisible world, and so must you, if ever death be desirable in your eyes, 2 Cor. iv. 18. It is said of all that died comfortably, "that they died "in faith," Heb. xi. 13. You will never be willing to go along with death, except you know where it will carry you.

2. They had assurance of heaven, as well as faith to discern it. Assurance is a lump of sugar, indeed, in the bitter cup of death; nothing sweetens like it. So 2 Cor. v. 1. so Job xix. 26, 27. This puts roses into the pale cheeks of death, and makes it amiable, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56. and Rom. viii. 38, 39.

3. Their hearts were weaned from this world, and an inordinate affection to a terrene life, Phil. iii. 8. all was dung and dross for Christ; they trampled under foot what we hug in our bosoms. So it is said, Heb. x. 34. "Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves," *&c.* And so it must be with us, if ever we obtain a complacency in death.

4. They ordered their conversations with much integrity, and so kept their consciences pure, and void of offence; Acts xxiv. 16. "Herein do I exercise myself," *&c.* and this was their comfort at last, 2 Cor. i. 12. "This is our rejoicing," *&c.* So Job xxvii. 5. "My integrity will I not let go till I die:" Oh! this unstings death of all its terrors.

5. They kept their love to Christ at the height: that flame was vehement in their souls, and made them despise the terror, and desire the friendly assistance of death, to bring them to the sight of Jesus Christ, Phil. i. 23. So Ignatius, *O how I long*, &c. Thus it must be with you, if ever you make death eligible and lovely to you, which is terrible in itself. There is a loveliness in the death, as well as in the life of a Christian: "Let me die "the death of the righteous," said Balaam.

Inference 2. Must we put off these tabernacles of flesh? *How necessary is it, that every soul look out in season, and make provision for another habitation?* * If you must be turned out of one house, you must provide another, or lie in the streets, This the apostle comforted himself with, that "if uncloathed, he "should not be found naked," 2 Cor. v. 1. a building of God, a house not made with hands. You must turn out, and that shortly, from these earthly habitations. Oh! what provision have you made for your souls against that day? The soul of Adrian was at a sad loss, when he saw he must be turned out of this world; *O animula vagula, blandula, heu quo vadis!* But it was Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob's privilege, that God had prepared for them a city, Heb. xi. 16.

* Many cry out on a death-bed, O send for Ministers and Christians to pray! Alas! what can they do then? Is that a time for so great a work to be shuffled up in a hurry, amidst distractions, and agonies.

I know it is a common preſumption of moſt men, that they ſhall be in heaven, when they can be no longer on earth. *Præſumendo ſperant, et ſperando pereunt.* But a few moments will convince them of their fatal miſtake; their poor ſouls will meet with a confounding repulſe, like that, Mat. vii. 22. There is indeed a city full of heavenly manſions prepared for ſome; but who are they that are entitled to it, and may confidently expect to be received into it? To be ſure, not the preſumptuous, who make a bridge of their own ſhadows, and ſo fall and periſh in the waters. Brethren, it is one of the moſt ſolemn enquiries you were ever put upon: and therefore I beſeech you, ſee whether your characters ſet you among thoſe men, or no.

1. Thoſe that are new-born, ſhall be cloathed with their new houſe from heaven, when death uncloaths them of theſe tabernacles: the *New Jeruſalem* hath none but new-born inhabitants, 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. and Chriſt tells us, John iii. 3. *all others are excluded.* Glory is the privilege of grace. Let nature be adorned, and cultivated how it will, if not renewed by grace, there is no hope of glory. You muſt be born again, or turned back again from the gates of heaven diſappointed. You muſt be regenerated, or damned. This alters the temper of thy heart, and ſuits it to the life of God, which is indiſpenſably neceſſary to them that ſhall live with him. Elſe heaven would be no heaven to us, Rom. viii. 7. and therefore we muſt be wrought this way to it, 2 Cor. v. 5. No privilege of nature, no duties of religion avail without this, Gal. vi. 15. If morality, without regeneration, could bring men to heaven, why are not the Heathens there? If ſtrictneſs in duty, without regeneration, why not the Phariſees there? Believe it, neither names, nor duties, no nor the blood of Chriſt, ever did, or ſhall bring one ſoul to glory without it. O then thou that boaſteſt of a houſe in heaven, lay thine hand on thy heart, and aſk it; Am I a new creature, *i. e.* Am I renewed, (1.) In my ſtate and condition? 1 John iii. 14. paſt from death to life. (2.) In my frame and temper? Eph. v. 8. "Once darkneſs now light in the Lord." (3.) In my practice and converſation? Eph. ii. 12, 13. 1 Cor. vi. 11. If not, my ſoul is deſtitute of an habitation in the city of God; and when I die, my body muſt lie in the lonely houſe of the grave, that dark vault and priſon, and my ſoul be ſhut out from God into outer darkneſs.

2. Thoſe that live as ſtrangers, and pilgrims on earth, ſeeking a better place, and ſtate, than this world affords them, for them God hath made preparations in glory, Heb. xi. 13, 16. If you be ſtrangers on earth, you are the inhabitants of heaven.

ow there be six things included in this character. 1. They ok not on this world as their own home, nor on the people of , as their own people, 2 Cor. v. 8. ἐκδημῆσαι, *to be unpeopled.* hese are none of my fellow-citizens, we must go two ways at eath. 2. They set not their affections on things present, as their ortion, 2 Cor. iv. 18. Psal. xvii. 13, 14. Their bodies are ere, their hearts in heaven. 3. Their carriage, and manner f life, not like the men of this world, 1 Pet. iv. 4. ξενίζονται. o the rule guides them, Rom. xii. 2. and so their course is teered; at least intended, Phil. iii. 20. our τὸ πολίτευμα, *our rade is in heaven.* (4.) Their dialect, and language, differs from the natives of this world. Their language is earthly, 1 John iv. 5, 6. but these have a *pure lip*, Zeph. iii. 9. (5.) Their society, and chosen companions are not of this world, Psal. xvi. 3. They are a company of themselves, Acts iv. 21. (6.) Their spirit, and temper of heart is not after the world, 1 Cor. ii. 12. They have *another spirit*, Numb. xiv. 24. These things discover us to be strangers on earth, and consequently, the men for whom God hath prepared heavenly habitations when we die.

3. Those that live and die by faith, shall not fail to be received into a better habitation by death. This is another character of them that shall be received into glory, laid down in the same place, Heb. xi. 13. They lived by faith, and when they died, they died embracing the promises, which is characteristical of those that shall dwell in that heavenly city; and implies, (1.) Intimate acquaintance with the promises, they are things well known, and familiarized to them. The word ἀσπασάμενοι, *Salutantes*, saluting them, is a metaphor, from the manner of parting betwixt two dear, and intimate friends. The faith of a Christian embraces the promises in its arms, as dear friends use to do at parting, and saith, Farewel, sweet promises, from which I have sucked out so much relief and refreshment in all the troubles of my life; I must now live no more by faith on you, but by sight: O you have often cheared my soul, and been my song in the house of my pilgrimage. (2.) It implies the firm credit, that a believer gives to things unseen, upon the grounds of the promises, as if he did sensibly take and grasp them in his very arms and bosom. They take Christ, and all the invisible things in the promises, into their sensible embraces, 1 Pet. i. 8. Faith is to them instead of eyes. (3.) It implies the sincerity of a believer's profession, who dares trust to that at last gasp, which he professed to believe in the midst of life, and the comforts of this

world. As he professed to believe in health, so you shall find his actings, when his eye and heart-strings are breaking, Rom. xiv. 9. Christ, in the promises, was his professed joy and life, and this is what he grasps at death, and lays his last hold on. (4.) It shews you whence all a believer's comforts come, in life and death. O it is from the promises, Christ in the promises is the spring of their consolation. This they fetch their comfort from, when the world cannot administer one drop of refreshment to them. There be two great works faith performs for the saints, one in life, the other in death: in life, it is the principle of mortification to their sins; in death, it is the spring of consolation to their hearts: it makes them die whilst they live, and live when they die.

4. Those that love the person, and appearance of Christ, have a mark that sets them among the inhabitants of heaven, and glory, 2 Tim. iv. 8. but then this love must be, (1.) sincere, and without hypocrisy. (2.) Supreme, and above all other beloveds. (3.) Conforming the soul to Christ; if sincere, *and* supreme, it will be transformative. (4.) Longing to be with him. Such love is a mark of souls for whom heaven is prepared.

Infer. 3. Must we put off our tabernacles, and that shortly? *What a spur is this to a diligent redemption, and improvement of time?* This is the use Peter made of it here, and every one of us should make. It was said of Bishop Hooper, he was sparé in his diet, spare in his words, but most of all spare in his time. You have but a little time in these tabernacles; what pity it *is* to waste much out of a little?

(1.) Great is the worth and excellency of time, all the treasures of the world cannot protract, stop, or call back one minute of time. O what is man that the heavenly bodies should be wheeled about by Almighty Power in constant revolutions, to beget time for him! Psal. viii. 3.

(2.) More precious are the seasons, and opportunities that are in time for our souls; those are the golden spots of time, like the pearl in the oyster-shell, of much more value than the shell that contains it. There is much time in a short opportunity. There is a day on which our eternal happiness depends, Luke xix. 41, 42. Heb. iv. 7.

(3.) Invaluable are the things which God doth for men's souls in time. There are works wrought upon mens hearts in a seasonable hour in this life, which have an influence into the soul's happiness throughout eternity. There is a time of mercy, a time of love, *viz.* of illumination, and conversion; and on

hat point of time, eternal life hangs in the whole weight of t.

(4.) Loſt opportunity is never to be recovered by the ſoul ny more, Ezek. xxiv. 13. Rev. xxii. 11. To come before the pportunity, is to come before the bird be hatched; and to come fter it, is to come when the bird is flown. There is no calling back time, when it is once paſt. See this in the examples you find, Luke xiii. 26. Eccleſ. ix. 10.

(5.) It is wholly uncertain to every ſoul, whether the preſent day may not determine his leaſe in this tabernacle, and a writ of ejection be ſerved by death upon his ſoul to morrow, James. iv. 13. Luke xii. 20.

(6.) As ſoon as ever time ſhall end, eternity takes place. The ſtream of time delivers ſouls daily into the boundleſs ocean of vaſt eternity. *Ab hoc momento pendet æternitas.* We are now meaſured by time, hereafter by eternity.

(7.) In eternity all things are fixed and unalterable. We have no more to do, all means and works are at an end, John ix. 4. and Eccleſ. xi. 3. "As the tree falls, ſo it lies." Oh that theſe weighty conſiderations might lie upon your hearts, as long as you are in theſe tabernacles! If they did, (1.) The unregenerate would not ſo deſperately hazard their eternal happineſs, by trifling away their precious ſeaſons under the goſpel. Oh how many aged ſinners, gray-headed ſinners, hear me this day, who in fifty or ſixty years never redeemed one ſolemn hour, to take their poor ſouls aſide out of the clutter and diſtracting noiſe of the world, to aſk, and debate this queſtion with them, *Oh my ſoul, how ſtands the caſe with thee in reference to the world to come!* They have found no time to bethink themſelves in what world their ſouls ſhall be landed, when time ſhall deliver them up into eternity. Their whole life hath been but a continual diverſion from one trifle to another; they have been ſerious in trifles, and trifled in things moſt ſerious: this will afford horrid reflections in the world to come. (2.) The regenerate would not caſt away the comfort of their lives, in the evidences of eternal life, at ſo cheap a rate as they do. May I not ſay to you as the apoſtle doth, Heb. v. 12. for the time you have had under the goſpel you might have attained a rich treaſure, both of grace, and comfort; *Turpe eſt ſenex elementarius.* Is it not ſhameful and inexcuſable, to be, where you were twenty years paſt? Oh! let theſe things ſink deep into every ſoul.

Inference 4. Muſt we ſhortly put off theſe our tabernacles? *Then ſlack your pace, and cool yourſelves; be not too eager in the*

proſecution of earthly deſigns. O what buſtling is here for the world, and for proviſions for futurity, when as far leſs would ſerve the turn! We need not victual a ſhip to croſs the channel to France, as if ſhe were bound to the Indies. Moſt mens proviſions, at leaſt their cares and thoughts, are far beyond the preparations of their abode in this world. The folly of this, Chriſt diſcovers in that parable, Luke xii. 19. and on this very account gives him the title of a fool, who provided for years, many years; when poor ſoul, he had not one night to enjoy thoſe proviſions.

Oh the multitude of thoughts and cares this world needleſly devours! We keep ourſelves in ſuch a continual hurry and crowd of cares, thoughts and employments about the concerns of the body, that we can find little time to be alone, communing with our own hearts about our great concernments in eternity. It is with many of us, in reſpect of our ſouls, and their great intereſts, as it is with a man that is deep in thoughts about ſome ſubject that wholly ſwallows him up, he ſeeth not what he ſeeth, nor heareth what he heareth of any other matter: his eyes ſeem to look upon this or that, but it is all one as if he did not. So it was with Archimedes, who was ſo intent in drawing his mathematical ſchemes, that though all the city was in an alarm, the enemy had taken it by ſtorm, the ſtreets filled with dreadful cries, and dead bodies, the ſoldiers came into his particular houſe, nay, entred his very ſtudy, and plucked him by the ſleeve, before he took any notice of it: even ſo many mens hearts are ſo profoundly immerſed, and drowned in earthly cares, thoughts, projects, or pleaſures, that death muſt come to their very houſes, yea, and pull them by the ſleeve, and tell them its errand, before they will begin to awake, and come to a ſerious conſideration of things more important.

Inference 5. If we muſt ſhortly put off theſe tabernacles, *then the groaning and mourning time of all believers is but ſhort: how heavy ſoever their burden be, yet they ſhall carry it but a little way.* It is ſaid, 2 Cor. v. 4. "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." Good ſouls, in this ſtate, are every where groaning under heavy preſſures. Their burdens are of two ſorts, ſympathetical, whereby they grieve with, and on the account of others, and ſo every true member of the church of God ought to ſympathize, both with God, Pſal. cxxxix. 21. "Am not I grieved with them that riſe up againſt thee?" Pſal. xlii. 10. "It is as with a ſword in their bones;" and with the people of God, Zeph. iii. 18. ſorrowful for the ſolemn aſſembly; ſo 2 Cor. xi. 29. "Who is offended, and I burn not?"

And indeed, it is an argument of rich, as well as true grace, that we can, and do heartily mourn with, and for the interest and people of God, though our own lot in the world, as Nehemiah's, be never so comfortable. Or, else our burdens are idiopathetical, *i. e.* such as we bear upon our own proper account and score. And where is the Christian that hath not his own burden, yea, many burdens on him at once? Some groan under the burden of sin, Rom. viii. 24. Scarce one day are the tears off from some eye-lids on this account. And who groans not under the burden of affliction, either inward upon the soul, Prov. xviii. 14. Job vi. 1, 2, 3. or outward upon the body, state, relations, *&c.* These things make the people of God a burden to themselves, Job vii. 20, 21. Yea, under these burdens they would sink, did not the Lord sustain them, Psal. lv. 22.

But God will put a speedy and final end to all these things. When you put off this tabernacle, you put off with it all those burdens, inward and outward. The soul presently feels a great load off its shoulders; it shall never groan more, God shall thenceforth wipe away all tears from their eyes: for why are those burdens now permitted, and imposed by the Lord upon you, but (1.) To prevent sin, Hos. ii. 6. They are your clogs, to keep you from straying. (2.) To purge out sin, Isa. xxvii. 9. (3.) To make you long more for heaven, and the rest to come. But all these ends are accomplished in that day you put off your tabernacles, for then sin is gone, and rest is come.

Infer. 6. Must you shortly put off those tabernacles? *Then spare them not whilst you have them, but employ them for God with all diligence.* Shortly they shall be useless to you, yea, meat for worms; now they may be serviceable, and their service is their honour: you received them not for such low ends as you employ them for. See 1 Cor. vi. 20. "Glorify God in "your souls and bodies, which are his:" You expect to have them glorious bodies one day; Oh then let them be serviceable bodies now! Be not fond of them to that degree many are, who chuse rather to have them *eaten out with rust*, than *worn out with service* *. It is your present honour to be active, and will be your singular comfort another day. What greater comfort, when you come to put them off at death, than this, that you have employed them faithfully for God.

Infer. 7. Look beyond this embodied state, and learn to live

* Ambrose said of Valentinian, No man was ever such a servant to his master, as Valentinian's body was to his soul.

now as you hope to live shortly; begin to be what you expect to be. You know the time is at hand, that you shall live above all bodily concernments and employments, the soul shall be a drudge to the body no more. You shall be as the angels, Mat. xxii. 30. not marrying, nor giving in marriage, which is, by a *synechdoche*, put for all carnal employments and enjoyments; eat no more, drink no more, sleep no more, buy and sell no more. Now suit yourselves as much as your state and the duties of religion will suffer you, to that state before-hand. The sum of what I am at is in 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30. Be in all your relations as if you had none. Look on those things, as if already they were not, which shortly must be none of yours; and both acquaint and accustom your thoughts to the life of separation from the body, which you must shortly leave. Which brings me home to the next point, *viz. The condition of human souls in the state of separation.*

* *

Heb. xii. 23. —— Καὶ πνεύμασι δικαίων τετελειωμένων. —— *And to the* spirits *of just men made perfect.*

THE particular scope of this context falls in with the general design of the whole gospel, which is to persuade men to a life of holiness. The matter of the exhortation is most weighty, and the arguments enforcing it most powerful: He doth not talk, but dispute; he doth not say, but prove, that greater, and more powerful engagements unto holiness lie upon those who live under the gospel, than upon the people who lived under the law. And thus the argument lies in this context.

If God, at the delivering of the law upon *mount Sinai*, strictly enjoined, and required so great purity, and holiness in that people, signified by the ceremonies of two days preparation, the washing of their cloaths, abstinence from conjugal society, *&c.* Exod. xix. 10. much more doth he require, and expect it in us, who are come under a much more excellent, and heavenly dispensation than theirs was.

To make good the *sequel*, he compares the *legal*, and *evangelical* dispensations, in many particulars, ver. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. giving the gospel the preference throughout the whole comparison.

Hence the privileges of the New Testament-believers are stated, both *negatively*, and *positively*.

1. *Negatively*, By shewing what we are exempted from.

2. *Positively*, Shewing what we are to come unto.

1. *Negatively*, What we are exempted, or freed from; ver. 18, 19, 20, 21. "We are not come unto the Mount that might "be touched," *&c.*

The sum of all is this, that the promulgation of the law was accompanied with amazing dread, and terror. For, after Moses, by command from God, had sanctified the *mount*, and set rails about it, that neither priest nor people, man nor beast, might touch the very borders of it, lest they die; the Lord descended in fire upon the top of the *mountain*, the third day in the morning, with most terrible tokens of divine majesty, *to wit*, with thundrings, lightnings, dark clouds, and the noise of a *trumpet*, exceeding loud; the *mount* was covered with smoke, as the smoke of a furnace, and † flames mounting up into the midst of heaven, the whole mountain shaking, and trembling exceedingly: Out of this horrid tempest the awful voice of God was heard, all the people in the camp trembling, yea, and Moses himself quaking for fear.

This was the manner of the law's promulgation: But to such a terrible dispensation as this we are not come, which is the negative part of our privilege.

2. He opens the positive privileges to which we are come.

(1.) "Ye are come (saith he) to mount Sion," not the earthly, but the spiritual Sion. Mount Sion was the place celebrated above all the world for the worship of God, Psal. lxxxvi. 7. "All my springs (saith God) are in thee. There was the temple, the ark of the covenant, the glory of the Lord dwelling between the *cherubims*. The *priests* that attended the service of God, had their residence there, as the angels have in heaven. Thither the tribes went up from all quarters of Judah, Psal. lxxxiv. as the children of God now do to heaven, from all quarters of the world. Judea was the best kingdom in the world; Jerusalem the best city in that kingdom; and Sion the most glorious place in that city. Here Christ taught his heavenly doctrine; near to it he finished his glorious work of redemption. Hence the everlasting gospel went forth into all the world: And, on these considerations, it is put to signify the gospel-church, or state in this place, and is therefore called *the heavenly Jerusalem*, in the following words. We do not come to the literal *Sion*, nor to the *earthly Jerusalem;* but to the gospel-church,

† *Crebris micat ignibus æther;* i. e. The sky shines with frequent lightnings.

or ſtate, which may be called a heaven upon earth, compared with that *literal Jeruſalem.*

(2.) Ye are come "to an innumerable company of angels."] to ‡ *myriads of angels*, a *myriad* is ten thouſand: but myriads in the plural number, and ſet down indefinitely too, may note many millions of angels: And therefore we fitly render it, "to "an innumerable company of angels."

They had the miniſtry of angels as well as we, thouſands of them miniſtred to the Lord in the diſpenſation of the law at Sinai, Pſal. lxviii. 17. But this notwithſtanding, we are come to a much clearer knowledge, both of their preſent miniſtry for us on earth, Heb. i. 14. and of our fellowſhip, and equality with them in heaven, Luke xx. 36.

(3.) "Ye are come to the general aſſembly, and church of "the firſt-born, whoſe names are written (or enrolled) in hea-"ven."] This alſo greatly commends, and amplifies the privileges of the New Teſtament-believers; the church of God in former ages was circumſcribed, and ſhut up within the narrow limits of one ſmall kingdom, which was a garden incloſed out of a waſte wilderneſs: But now, by the calling in of the Gentiles, the church is extended far and wide, Eph. iii. 5, 6. It is become a great aſſembly, comprizing the believers of all nations under heaven; and ſo ſpeaking of them collectively, it is the general convention, or aſſembly, which is alſo dignified, and enobled by two illuſtrious characters, *viz.* (1.) That it is *the church of the firſt-born, (i. e.)* conſiſting of members dignified, and priviledged above others, as the firſt-born among the Iſraelities did excel their younger brethren. (2.) That their *names are written in heaven, (i. e.)* regiſtred, or enrolled in God's book, as children, and heirs of the heavenly inheritance, as the firſt-born in ‖ Iſrael were regiſtred in order to the prieſthood, Num. iii. 40, 41.

(4.) Ye are come "to God, the Judge of all."] But why to God the Judge? This ſeems to ſpoil the harmony, and jar with the other parts of the diſcourſe. No, no; they are come to God as a righteous Judge, who as ſuch, will pardon them, 1 John i. 9. *Crown* them, 2 Tim. iv. 8. and *avenge* them on all their oppreſſing, and perſecuting enemies. 1 Theſſ. i. 5, 6, 7.

‡ *Μυριασιν αγγελων, i. e.* Myriads of angels. The Helleniſts uſe the word *μυριαδας, i. e.* Myriads, without any addition to ſignify an innumerable multitude. *Grot.*

‖ The firſt-born of the Iſraelites were regiſtred in an earthly regiſter, but theſe in an heavenly regiſter.

(5.) "And to the spirits of just men made perfect." A most glorious privilege indeed; in which we are distinctly to consider,

1. The quality of those with whom we are associated or taken into fellowship.

2. The way and manner of our association with them.

1. The quality of those with whom we are associated, or to whom we are said to be come; and they are described by three characters, *viz.*

(1.) Spirits of men.

(2.) Spirits of just men.

(3.) Spirits of just men perfected, or consummated.

(1.) They are called spirits, that is, immaterial substances, strictly opposed to bodies, which are no way the objects of our exterior senses, neither visible to the eye, or sensible to the touch, which were called properly souls whilst they animated bodies in this lower world; but now being loosed and separated from them by death, and existing alone in the world above, they are properly and strictly stiled spirits.

(2.) They are the *spirits of just men.*] Man may be termed *just* two ways, (1.) By a full discharge and acquittance from the guilt of all his sins, and so believers are *just men*, even whilst they live on earth, groaning under other imperfections, Acts xiii. 39. Or, (2.) By a total freedom from the pollution of any sin. And though in this sense there is not "a just man "upon earth that doth good, and sinneth not," Eccles. vii. 22. yet even in this sense Adam was just before the fall, Eccles. vii. 29. according to his original constitution; and all believers are so, in their glorified condition; all sin being perfectly purged out of them, and its existence utterly destroyed in them. On which account,

(3.) They are called the spirits of just men *made perfect*,] or consummate. The word perfect is not here to be understood absolutely, but by way of *synecdoche*; they are not perfect in every respect, for one part of these just men lies rotting in the grave: but they are perfected, for so much as concerns their spirit; though the flesh perish and lie in dishonour, yet their spirits being once loosed from the body, and freed radically and perfectly from sin, are presently admitted to the facial vision and fruition of God, which is the culminating point (as I may call it) higher than which the spirit of man aspires not; and attaining to this, it is, for so much as concerns itself, made perfect. Even as a body at last lodged in its centre, gravitates no more, but is at perfect rest; so it is with the spirit of man come home

to God in glory, 'tis now consummate, no more need to be done to make it as perfectly happy as it is capable to be made; which is the first thing to be considered, *viz.* the quality of those with whom we are associated.

2. The second follows, namely, the way and manner of our association with these blessed spirits of just men, noted in this expression, [*we are come.*] He saith not, *we shall come* hereafter, when the resurrection hath restored our bodies, or after the general judgment; but, *we are come* to these spirits of just men. The meaning whereof we may take in these three particulars.

(1.) We that live under the gospel-light, are come to a clearer apprehension, sight and knowledge of the blessed and happy estate of the souls of the righteous after death, than ever they had, or ordinarily could have, who lived under the types and shadows of the law, Eph. iii. 4, 5. And so we are come to them, in respect of clearer apprehension.

(2.) We are come to those blessed spirits in our representative, Christ, who hath carried our nature into the very midst of them, and whom they all behold with highest admiration and delight. By Christ, who is entred into that holy place where these spirits of just men live, we are come into a near relation with them: For he being the common head, both to them in heaven, and to us on earth, we and they consequentially make but one body or society, Eph. ii. 10. Whereupon (notwithstanding the different and remote countries they and we live in) we are said "to sit down with them in heavenly places," Eph. iii. 15. and ii. 6.

(3.) *We are come.*] That is, we are as good as come, or we are upon the matter come; there remains nothing betwixt them and us but a puff of breath, a little space of time, which shortens every moment: We are come to the very borders of their country, and there is nothing, to speak of, betwixt them and us: And by this expression, *we are come*, he teacheth us to account and reckon those things as present, which so shortly will be present to us, and to look upon them as if they already were, which is the highest and most comfortable life of faith we can live on earth. Hence the note is,

Doct. *That righteous and holy souls, once separated from their bodies by death, are immediately perfected in themselves, and associated with others alike perfect in the kingdom of God.*

That the spirits of just men at the time of their separation from their bodies do not utterly fail in their beings, nor that they are so prejudiced and wounded by death, that they cannot

exert their own proper acts in the absence of the body, hath been already cleared in the foregoing parts of this treatise, and will be more fully cleared from this text.

But the true level and aim of this discourse is at a higher mark, *viz.* the far more excellent, free, and noble life the souls of the just begin to live immediately after their bodies are dropt off from them by death, at which time they begin to live like themselves, a pleasant, free, and divine life. So much at least is included in the apostle's epithet in my text, spirits of just men made perfect; and suitable thereto are his words in 1 Cor. xiii. 10, 12. "When that which is perfect is come, then that which "is in part shall be done away. For now we see thro' a glass "darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then "I shall know, even as also I am known."

These two adverbs, *now* and *then*, distinguish the twofold state of gracious souls, and shew what it is whilst they are confined in the body, and what it shall be from the time of their emancipation and freedom from that clog of mortality. *Now* we are imperfect, but *then* that which is perfect takes place, and that which is imperfect is done away, as the imperfect twilight is done away by the opening of the perfect day.

And it deserves a serious animadversion, that this perfect state doth not succeed the imperfect one after a long interval, (as long as betwixt the dissolution and resurrection of the body) but the imperfect state of the soul is immediately done away by the coming of the perfect one. The glass is laid by as useless, when we come to see face to face, and eye to eye.

The waters will prove very deep here, too deep for any line of mine to fathom; there is a cloud always overshadowing the world to come, a gloom and haziness upon that state: Fain we would, with our weak and feeble beam of imperfect knowledge, penetrate this cloud, and dispel this gloom and haziness, but cannot: We think seriously and close to this great and awful subject, but our thoughts cannot pierce through it: we reinforce those thoughts by a sally, or thick succession of fresh thoughts, and yet all will not do, our thoughts return to us either in confusion, or without the expected success. For alas, how little is it that we know, or can know of our own souls now whilst they are embodied! much less of their unbodied state. The apostle tells us, 1 Cor ii. 9 "That eye hath not "seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of "man, the things which God hath prepared for them that

" love him." And another apoſtle adds, " It doth not yet ap-
" pear what we ſhall be," 1 John iii. 2.

Yet all this is no diſcouragment to the ſearch, and regular enquiry into the future ſtate; for though reaſon cannot penetrate theſe myſteries, yet God hath *revealed them to us* (tho' not perfectly) *by his Spirit.* And though we know not particularly, and circumſtantially) what we ſhall be, yet this we know, that " we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is." And it is our privilege, and happineſs, that we are come to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, *(i. e.)* to a clearer knowledge of that ſtate, than was ordinarily attainable by believers, under former diſpenſations.

Theſe things premiſed, I will proceed to open my apprehenſions of the ſeparate ſtate of the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, in *twelve propoſitions;* whereby, as by ſo many ſteps, we may orderly advance as far as ſafely, and warrantably we may, *into* the knowledge of this great myſtery, clearing what afterwards ſhall remain obſcure, in the ſolution of ſeveral queſtions relating to this ſubject, and then apply the whole, in ſeveral uſes of this great point: And the firſt propoſition is this:

Propoſition 1. There is a two-fold ſeparation of the ſoul from the body: *viz.* one mental, the other real: Or,

1. Intellectual, by the mind only.

2. Phyſical, by the ſtroke of death.

1. Of intellectual, or mental ſeparation *, I am firſt to ſpeak in this propoſition; and it is nothing elſe but an act of the underſtanding, or mind, conceiving, or conſidering the ſoul and body, as ſeparate and parted each from other, whilſt yet they are united in a perſonal oneneſs by the breath of life. This mental ſeparation may, and ought to be frequently, and ſeriouſly made, before death makes the real, and actual ſeparation; and the more frequently, and ſeriouſly we do it, the leſs of horror, and diſtraction will attend that real, and fatal ſtroke, whenever it ſhall be given: For hereby we learn to bear it gradually, and, by gentle eſſays, to acquaint our ſhoulders with the burden of it. *Separation* is a word that hath much of horror in the very ſound, and uſeth to have much more in the ſenſe and feeling of it, elſe it would not deſerve that title, Job viii. 14. " The king of terrors," or the moſt terrible of all terribles: But acquaintance, and familiarity abates that horror, and that two ways eſpecially.

* Mental ſeparation is, a conceiving of two things ſeparately, which really are united. *Conimbr. on the ſoul,* p. 595.

(1.) As it is preventive of much guilt.

(2.) As it gains a more inward knowledge of its nature.

(1.) The ſerious, and fixed thoughts of the parting hour, is preventive of much guilt; and the greateſt part of the horror of death riſes out of the guilt of ſin; "The ſting of death is "ſin," 1 Cor. xv. 56. * Auguſtine ſaith, "Nothing more "recals a man from ſin, than the frequent meditation of death." I dare not ſay it is the ſtrongeſt of all curbs to keep us back from ſin, but I am ſure it is a very ſtrong one.

Let † a ſoul but ſeriouſly meditate what a change death will make ſhortly upon his perſon, and condition; and the natural effects of ſuch a meditation, through the bleſſing of God upon it, will be a flatting, and quenching of its keen, and raging appetite, after the enſnaring vanities of this world (which draw men into ſo much guilt) a conſcientious fear of ſin, and an awakened care of duty. It was once demanded of a very holy man (who ſpent much more than the ordinary allowance of time in prayer, and ſearching his own heart) why he ſo macerated his own body by ſuch frequent, and long-continued duties! His anſwer was, *Oh! I muſt die, I muſt die!* Nothing could ſeparate him from duty, who had already ſeparated his ſoul from his body, and all this world, by fixed, and deep thoughts of death.

(2.) Hereby we gain a more inward knowledge, and acquaintance with it, the leſs it terrifies us. A lion is much more dreadful to him that never ſaw him, than he is to his keeper, who feedeth him every day. A pitch'd battle is more frightful, and ſcaring to a new-liſted ſoldier, that never took his place in the field before; nor ſaw the dreadful countenance of an army ready to engage, nor heard the thundring noiſe of cannon, and vollies of ſhot, the ſhouts of armies, and groans of dying men on every ſide, than it is to an old ſoldier who hath been uſed to ſuch things. The like we may obſerve in ſeamen, who it may be trembled at firſt, and now can ſing in a ſtorm.

Scarce any thing is more neceſſary for weak and timorous believers to meditate on, than the time of their ſeparation. Our hearts will be apt to ſtart, and boggle at the firſt view of death;

* *Nihil ſic revocat a peccato, quam frequens mortis meditatio.* Aug.

† He who conſiders, what he will be in death, will always act with a fear of caution, and live as in the ſight of his Creator, he deſires nothing that is tranſitory, and conſiders himſelf as almoſt dead, becauſe he knows he muſt ſoon die. *Greg. Mer.* 12.

but it is good to do by them as men use to do by young colts, ride them up to that which they fright at, and make them smell to it, which is the way to cure them. "Look, as bread, "saith one ‡, is more necessary than other food, so the medita- "tion of death is more necessary than many other meditati- "ons." Every time we change our habitations, we should realize therein our great change: our souls must shortly leave this, and be lodged for a longer season in another mansion. When we put off our cloaths at night, we have a fit occasion to consider, that we must strip nearer one of these days, and put off not our cloaths only, but the body that wears them too.

Holy Job had, by frequent thoughts, familiarized death and the grave to himself, and could speak of them as men use to speak of their houses and dearest relations, Job xvii. 14. "I have "said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou "art my mother and sister." But it needs much grace to bring, and hold the heart to this work; and therefore Moses begs it of God, Psal. xc. 12. "So teach us to number our "days;" and David, Psal. xxxix. 4. "Lord, make me know "my end." Yea, the advantages of it have been acknowledged by men, whose light was less, and diversions more than ours. The Jews, for this use and end, had their sepulchres built before-hand, and that in their gardens of pleasure too; that they might season the delights of life with the frequent thoughts of death, John xix. 41.

Philip of Macedon would be awakened by his page every morning with this sentence, *memento te esse mortalem*; Remember, O king, that thou art a mortal man. A great emperor of Constantinople, not only at his inauguration, but at his great feasts, ordered a mason to bring two stones before him, and say, "‖ Chuse, O emperor, which of the two stones thou wilt for "thy tomb-stone." Reader, thou wilt find mental separation much easier than real separation: it is easier to think of death, than it is to feel it; and the more we think of it, the less we are like to feel it.

Proposition 2. *Actual separation may be considered either* in fieri, *in the previous pangs, and foregoing agonies of it; or* in facto esse, *in the last separating stroke, which actually parts the*

‡ *Sicut panis necessarius est præ cæteris elementis, ita intenta mortis meditatio necessaria est præ cæteris donis et exercitiis.* Dionys.

‖ *Elige ab his saxis ex quo, invictissime Cæsar, tibi tumulum mi fabricare velis.*

ſoul and body aſunder, lays the body proſtrate, and dead at the feet of death, and thruſts the ſoul quite out of its antient and beloved habitation.

Let it be conſidered in the previous pangs and forerunning agonies, which commonly make way for this actual diſſolution: and to the people of God, this is the worſt and bittereſt part of death (except thoſe conflicts with Satan, which they ſometimes grapple with on a death-bed) which they encounter at that time. There is (ſaith one) no poinard in death itſelf, like thoſe in the way or prologue to it. I like not to die, (ſaid another) but I care not if I were dead; the end is better than the way. The conflicts and ſtruggles of nature with death are bitter and ſharp pains, unknown to men before, whatever pains they have endured: nor can it be expected to be otherwiſe, ſeeing the ties and engagements betwixt the ſoul and body are ſo ſtrong, as we ſhewed before.

The ſoul will not eaſily part with the body, but diſputes the paſſages with Death, from member to member, like reſolute ſoldiers in a ſtormed garriſon, till at laſt it is forced to yield up the fort-royal into the hands of victorious Death, and leave the dearly beloved body a captive to it.

This is the dark ſide of death to all good men; and though it be not worth naming, in compariſon with the dreadful conſequents of death to all others, yet in itſelf it is terrible.

* Separation is not natural to the ſoul, which was created with an inclination to the body; it is natural indeed to claſp and embrace, to love and cheriſh its own body; but to be divided from it, is grievous and preternatural.

The agonies of death are expreſſed in ſcripture, by a † word which ſignifies "the travailing pains of a woman," yea, by the ſharpeſt and moſt acute pains they at that time feel, Acts ii. 24.

And yet all are not handled alike roughly by the hands of Death; ſome are favoured with a deſirable εὐθανασία, gentle and eaſy death.

It is the privilege of ſome Chriſtians to have their ſouls fetcht out of their bodies, as it were by a kiſs from the mouth of God, as the Jewiſh Rabbins uſe to expreſs the manner of Moſes his death. Mr. Bolton felt no pain at his death, but the cold hand

* Seeing the ſeparation made by death is not natural, nor even violent, it follows, from the approved opinion of philoſophers, that it may be called preternatural. *Conimb.*

† Τας ὠδινας του θανατου, *partus dolorem.*

of his friend, who aſked him what pain he felt. Yea, holy Bayneham in the midſt of the flames, profeſſed it was to him as a bed of roſes.

Every believer is equally freed from the ſting and curſe of death; but every one is not equally favoured in the agonies and pains of death.

2. Separation from the body is to be conſidered *in facto eſſe, i. e.* in the reſult and iſſue of all thoſe bitter pangs and agonies, which end in the actual diſſolution of ſoul and body. "* Death, "or actual ſeparation, is nothing elſe but the diſſolving of the "tie, or looſing of the bond of union betwixt the ſoul and bo-"dy." "† Some call it the privation of the ſecond act of the "ſoul, that is, its act of informing or enlivening the body." Others, according to ſcripture-phraſe, the departing of the ſoul from the body. So Peter ſtiles it, 2 Pet. i. 15. μετα την εμην εξοδον, after my departure, *i. e.* after my death. Auguſtine ‡ calls it the laying down of a heavy burden, provided there be not another burden for the ſoul to bear afterwards, which will ſink it into hell.

In reſpect of the body, which the ſoul now forſakes, it is called "the putting off this tabernacle," 2 Pet. i. 14. and, "the "diſſolving the earthly houſe or tabernacle," 2 Cor. v. 1.

In reſpect of the *terminus a quo*, the place from which the ſoul removes at death, it is called our departure hence, Phil. i. 23. or our weighing anchor, and looſing from this coaſt or ſhore, to ſail to another.

In reſpect of the *terminus ad quem*, the place to which the ſpirits of the juſt go at death, it is called our going to, or being with the Lord, Phil. i. 23. To conclude, in reſpect of that which doth moſt lively reſemble and ſhadow it forth, it is called our falling aſleep, Acts vii. 60. our ſleeping in Jeſus, 1 Theſ. iv. 14. This metaphor of ſleep muſt be ſtretched no further than the Spirit of God deſigned in the choice of it, which was not to favour and countenance the fancy of a ſleeping ſoul after death, but to repreſent its ſtate of placid reſt in Jeſus's boſom, if it refer at all to the ſoul; for I think it moſt properly reſpects the body: and thence the ſepulchres, where the bodies of the

* Θανατος εστι ψυχης και σωματος διαλυσις, *vel animæ a corpore diſceſſus.* Vives.

† *Privatio actus ſecundum ejuſdem animæ, id eſt, informationis ſeu unionis erga corpus.* Conimb.

‡ *Relictio corporis depoſitio ſarcinæ gravis, modo alio ſarcinæ non patietur, qua homo præcipitetur in gehennam.* Auguſt.

saints were laid, got the name of κοιμητηρια, dormitories, or sleeping places ‖.

This is its last farewel to this world, never more to return to a low animal life more. Job vii. 9, 10. "For as the cloud is "consumed and vanished away, so he that goeth down to the "grave shall come up no more; he shall return no more to his "house, neither shall his place know him any more." The soul is no more bound to a body, nor a retainer to the sun, moon or stars, to meat, drink and sleep, but is become a free, single, abstracted being, a separate and pure spirit, which the Latins call *lemures*, *manes*, ghosts or souls of the dead, and my text, *Spirits made perfect*; a being much like unto the angels, who are δυναμεις ασωματοι, bodiless beings. An angel, as one speaks, is a perfect soul, a soul is an imperfect angel: I do not say, that upon their separation they become angels, for they will still remain a distinct species of spirits. Angels have no inclination to bodies, nor were ever fettered with clogs of flesh, as souls were *. And by this you see what a vast difference there is betwixt these two considerations of death: how ghastly and affrighting is it in its previous pangs! how lovely and desirable in the issue and result of them! which is but the change of earth for heaven, men for God, sin and misery, for perfection and glory.

Proposition 3. *The separation of the soul and body makes a great and wonderful change upon both, but especially upon the soul.*

There is a twofold change made upon man by death, one upon his body, another upon his soul. The change upon the body is great and visible to every eye. A living body is changed into a dead carcase: a beautiful and comely body into a loathsome spectacle: that which was lately the object of delight and love, is hereby made an abhorrence to all flesh; "Bury my dead out of my sight," Gen. xxiii. 4.

What the sun is to the greater, that the soul is to the lesser world. When the sun shines comfortably, how vegete and chearful do all things look! how well do they thrive and prosper! the birds sing merrily, the beasts play wantonly, the whole creation enjoyeth a day of light and joy: but when it departs, what a night of horror followeth! how are all things

‖ *Locus sepulturæ consecratus,* κοιμητηριον, *hoc est, dormitorium appellatur.*

* *Semper a corporis compedibus et nexibus liberi,* (i. e.) Always free from the clogs and fetters of the body.

wrapt up in the sable mantle of darkness! or if it but abate its heat, as in winter, the creatures are, as it were, buried in the winding-sheet of winter's frost and snow: just so it is with the body, when the soul shineth pleasantly upon it, or departs from it.

That body which was fed so assiduously, cared for so anxiously, loved so passionately, is now tumbled into a pit, and left to the mercy of crawling worms. The change which judgment made upon that great and flourishing city Niniveh, is a fit emblem to shadow forth that change which death makes upon human bodies: that great and renowned city was once full of people, which thronged the streets thereof; there you might have seen children playing upon the thresholds, beauties shewing themselves through the windows, melody sounding in its palaces: but what an alteration was made upon it, the prophet Zephaniah describes, chap. ii. 14. "Flocks shall lie down in the midst "of her, all the beasts of the nations; both the cormorant and "the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice "shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresh-"olds, for he shall uncover the cedar-work."

Thus it is with the body when death hath dislodged the soul: worms nestle in the holes where the beautiful eyes were once placed; corruption and desolation is upon all parts of that stately structure. But this being a vulgar theme, I shall leave the body to the dust from whence it came, and follow the soul, which is my proper subject, pointing at the changes which are made on it.

The essence of the soul is not destroyed or changed by the body's ruin; it is substantially the self-same soul it was when in the body. The supposition of an essential change, would disorder the whole frame and model of God's eternal design for the redemption and glorification of it, Rom. viii. 29, 30. But yet, though it undergo no substantial change at death, yet divers great and remarkable alterations are made upon it, by sundering it from the body. As,

1. It is not where it was: it was in a body, immers'd in matter, married unto flesh and blood; but now it is out of the body, uncloathed, and stript naked out of its garments of flesh, like pure gold melted out of the ore with which it was commixed; or as a bird let out of her cage into the open fields and woods. This makes a great and wonderful change upon it.

2. Being free from the body, it is consequently discharged and freed from all those cares, studies, fears, and sorrows to which it was here enthralled and subjected, upon the body's account: it

puts off all those passions and burdens with it; never spends one thought more about food and raiment, health and sickness, wives and children, riches or poverty, but lives henceforth after the manner of angels, Matth. xxii. 30. It is now unrelated to, and therefore unconcerned about all these things.

3. In the unbodied state it is perfectly freed from sin, both in the acts and habits; a mercy it never enjoyed since the first moment it dwelt in the body. The cure of this disease was indeed begun in the work of sanctification; but it is not perfected till the day of the soul's glorification. 'Tis now, and not till now, a spirit made perfect; that is, a soul enjoying its perfect health and rectitude: No more groans, tears, or lamentations, upon the account of indwelling sin.

4. The way and manner of its converse with, and enjoyment of God is changed. There are two *mediums* by which souls converse with God in the body, *viz.*

(1.) One internal, *to wit*, faith.

(2.) The other external, *to wit*, ordinances.

(1.) If a man walk with God on earth, it must be in the use and exercise of faith, 2 Cor. v. 7. Nor can there be any communion carried on betwixt God and the soul without it, Heb. xi. 6.

(2.) The external *mediums* are the ordinances of God, or duties of religion, both public and private, Psal. lxiii. 2. Betwixt these two *mediums* of communion with God, this remarkable difference is found: The soul may see and enjoy God by faith, in the want or absence of ordinances; but there is no seeing or conversing with God, in the greatest plenty and purity of ordinances, without faith, Heb. iv. 2.

But in the same moment the soul is cut off from union with the body, it is also cut off from both these ways of enjoying God, 1 Cor. xiii. 12, Isa. xxxviii. 11. But yet the soul is no loser; nay, it is the greatest *gainer* by this change. The child is no loser by ceasing to derive its nourishment by the navel, when it comes to receive it by the mouth, a more noble way, whereby it gets a new pleasure in tasting the variety of all delectable food. Hezekiah bemoaned the loss of ordinances upon his supposed death-bed, saying, "I shall not see the Lord, even "the Lord in the land of the living:" *q. d.* Now farewel temple and ordinances; I shall never go any more into his temple, where my soul hath been so often cheared and refreshed with the displays of his grace and goodness; I shall never more join with the assembly of his people on earth. And suppose he had

not, ſure he would have loſt nothing, had he then exchanged the temple at Jeruſalem, for the temple in heaven; and communion with ſinful imperfect ſaints on earth, for fellowſhip with angels, and "the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect." By this change we loſe no more than he loſeth, who whilſt he ſtands delightfully contemplating the image of his deareſt friend in a glaſs, hath the glaſs ſnatched away by his friend, whom he now ſeeth face to face.

Upon this change of the mediums of communion, it will follow, that the communion betwixt God and the ſeparate ſoul, excels all the communion it ever had with him on earth, in

(1.) The clearneſs.
(2.) The ſweetneſs.
(3.) The conſtancy of it.

(1.) Its viſions of God, in the ſtate of ſeparation, are more clear, diſtinct, and direct than they were on earth; clouds and ſhadows are now fled away: The ſoul now ſeeth as it is ſeen, and knoweth as it is known; its apprehenſions of God there, differ from thoſe it had here, as the crude and confuſed apprehenſions of a child do, from thoſe we have in the manly ſtate.

(2.) They are alſo more ſweet and raviſhing: As our viſions are, ſo are our pleaſures; perfect viſions produce perfect pleaſures: The faculties of the ſoul now, and never till now, lie level to that rule, Matth. xxii. 37. The viſions of God command, and call forth all the heart and ſoul, mind and ſtrength, into acts of love and delight. It was not ſo here; if the ſpirit was willing, the fleſh was weak; but there the clog is off from the foot of the will.

(3.) More conſtant, fixed, and ſteddy. 'Tis one of the greateſt difficulties in religion, to fix the thoughts, and cure the wildneſs and rovings of the fancy: The heart is not ſteddy with God; and hence are its ups and downs, heatings and coolings; which are things unknown in the perfect ſtate. By all which it apears, the change by diſſolution is great and marvellous, both upon the body and ſoul, but upon the ſoul more eſpecially.

Propoſition 4. *The ſouls of the righteous, at the inſtant of their ſeparation, are received by the bleſſed angels, and by them tranſferred unto the place of bleſſedneſs.*

Though angels are by nature a ſuperior order of ſpirits, differing from men in dignity, as the nobles and barons in the kingdoms of this world, differ from inferior ſubjects; yet are they made miniſtring ſpirits, *(i. e.)* ſerviceable creatures in the kingdom of providence, to the meaneſt of the ſaints, Heb. i. 14. And herein the Lord puts a ſingular honour upon his peo-

ple, in making such excellent creatures as angels serviceable to them: Luther assigns to them a double office, to wit, to sing the praises of God on high, and to watch over his saints here below. Their ministry is distinguished into three branches: Νουθετικον, for admonition or warning; Φυλακτικον, for protection and defence; Βοηθητικον, for succour, help and comfort. This last office they perform more especially at the soul's departure: Like tender nurses, they keep us whilst we live, and bring us home in their arms to our Father's house when we die.

They are about our death-beds, waiting to receive their precious charge into their arms and bosoms. When Lazarus breathed out his soul, the text saith, it was "carried by the angels unto Abraham's bosom," Luke xvi. 23. And upon this account, Tertullian calls them *evocatores animarum*, the callers forth of souls. At the translation of Elijah, they appeared in the form of horses and chariots of fire, 2 Kings ii. 11. Horses and chariots are not only designed for conveyance, but for conveyance in state; and truly, it is no small honour to have such a noble convoy and guard to attend our souls to heaven.

Object. If it be demanded, *What need is there of their help or company? Cannot God by his immediate hand and power gather home the souls of his people to himself at death? He inspired them into our bodies without their help, and can receive them again when we expire them, without their aid.*

Solut. True, he can do so; but it hath pleased him to appoint this method of our translation, not out of mere necessity, but bounty. Souls ascend not to God in the virtue of the angels wings, or arms, but of Christ's ascension. Had he not ascended as our head, and representative, all the angels in heaven could not have brought our souls thither: He ascended by his own power, and we ascend by the virtue of his ascension. It is therefore rather for the state and *decorum*, than any absolute necessity, that they attend us in our ascension.

God will not only have his people brought home to him safely, but honourably: They shall come to their Father's house in a becoming equipage, as the children of a king. This puts honour upon our ascension-day; that day is adorned by the attendance of such illustrious creatures upon us. It is no small honour which God herein designs for us, that creatures of greater dignity than ourselves, shall be sent from heaven to attend, and wait upon us thither.

Yea, that our ascension-day should, in this, resemble Christ's ascension, is an honour indeed. When he ascended, there were multitudes of these heavenly creatures to wait upon him,

Psal. lxviii. 17, 18. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, "even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Si- "nai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high," &c. A cloud was prepared as a royal chariot, to carry up the King of glory to his princely pavilion; and then a royal guard of mighty angels to wait upon his chariot; if not for support, yet for the greater state, and solemnity of their Lord's ascension. And O what jubilations of blessed angels were heard that day in heaven! How was the whole city of God moved at his coming! The triumph is not ended to this day, no, nor ever shall.

Now, herein God greatly honours his people, that there shall be some resemblance, and conformity betwixt their ascension, and Christ's; * Angels rejoice to attend those to heaven, who must be their fellow-citizens for ever in heaven! It is convenient also, that those who had the charge of us all our life, should attend us to our Father's house at our death: In the one, they finish their ministry; in the other, they begin their more intimate society.

Moreover, the angels are they whom God will employ, to gather together his elect from the four winds of heaven, at the great day, Matth. xxiv. 31. And who more fit to attend their spirits to heaven singly, than those who must collect them into one body at last, and wait upon that collective body, when they shall be brought to Christ? Psal. lxv. 14.

Object. *But the sight, and presence of angels is exceeding awful, and overwhelming to human nature: It will rather astonish and terrify, than refresh and chear us, to find ourselves, all on a sudden, surrounded, and beset with such majestic creatures. We see what effects the appearance of an* angel *hath had upon good men in this world:* "We shall die, (saith Manoah) for we have "seen God," Judges xiii. 22. So Eliphaz, "a spirit passed be- "fore my face; the hair of my flesh stood up," Job iv. 15.

Solut. True, whilst our souls inhabit these mortal and sinful bodies, the appearance of angels is terrible to them, and cannot be otherwise, partly upon a *natural*, and partly upon a *moral* account. The dread of angels naturally falls upon our animal spirits: They shrink and tremble at the approach of spirits; not only the spirits of men, but of beasts, quail at it. A dog, or a horse is terrified at it, as well as a man, Numb. xxii. 25. The dread of spirits strikes the animal, or natural spirits prima-

* As they, (*i. e.* angels) served the head, in like manner do they serve the members. They rejoice to serve them on earth, whom they shall have afterwards for companions in heaven. *Gerhard.*

rily; and the mind, or rational ſoul, by conſent. There is alſo another cauſe of fear in man, upon the ſight, or preſence of angels, *viz.* a conſciouſneſs of guilt. Wherever there is guilt, there will be fear, eſpecially upon any extraordinary appearance of God to us, though it be but mediately upon an angel.

But when the ſoul is freed, both from fleſh, and ſin, and ſhall enjoy itſelf in a nature like to theſe pure and holy ſpirits, the dread of angels is then vaniſhed, and the ſoul will take great content, and ſatisfaction in their company and communion: The ſoul then finds itſelf a fit companion for them; looks upon them as its fellow-ſervants, for ſo they are, Rev. xix. 10. And the angels look upon the ſpirits of juſt men, not as inferiors, underlings, but with great reſpect, as ſpirits, in ſome ſenſe, nearer to Chriſt than themſelves: So that henceforth no dread falls upon us from the preſence of theſe excellent creatures; but each enjoyeth ſingular delight, in each other's ſociety. And thus we ſee in what honourable and pleaſing company the ſouls of the juſt go hence to their Father's houſe, and boſom.

Propoſition 5. *The ſoul is not ſo maimed and prejudiced by its ſeparation from the body, but that it both can, and doth live, and act without it; and performs the acts of cogitation, and volition, without the aid, and miniſtry of the body.*

I know it is objected by them that aſſert the ſoul's ſleeping till the reſurrection, that though its eſſence be not deſtroyed by death, yet its operations are obſtructed by the want, and abſence of the body, its tool, and inſtrument: And thus they form their objection.

Object. *All that the ſoul underſtands, it underſtands by* ſpecies †; *that is, the images of things which are firſt formed in the phantaſy: As when we would conceive the nature of a houſe, a ſhip, a man, or a beaſt: we firſt form the image, or ſpecies thereof in our fancy, and then exerciſe our thoughts about it: But this depending upon bodily organs, and inſtruments, the ſeparated ſoul can form no ſuch images: It hath no ſuch innate* ſpecies *of its own, but comes into the world an* abraſa tabula, *white paper; and being deprived by ſeparation of the help of ſenſes, and phantaſms, it conſequently underſtands nothing.*

† There are three conditions requiſite for the acts of the underſtanding. 1. The object, a being that is real and intelligible. 2. The Phantaſm, or ſenſible image lurking in the phantaſy. 3. The intelligible image, which is a ſpiritual accident, repreſenting to the underſtanding, in an ideal way, the material object that exiſts without the underſtanding.

Thus the ſoul, in its ſtate of ſeparation, is repreſented to us as wounded in its powers, and operations, to that degree, which ſeems to extinguiſh the very nature of it. But,

Solut. 1. We deny that the ſoul knows nothing now but by phantaſms ‡, and images; for it knows itſelf, its own nature and powers, of which it cannot poſſibly feign, or form any image or repreſentation. What form, ſhape, or figure, can the fancy of a man caſt his own ſoul into, to help him to underſtand its nature?

And what ſhall we ſay of its underſtanding during an extaſy, or rapture? Doth the ſoul know nothing at ſuch a time? Doth a dull torpor ſeize and benumb its intellectual powers? No, no, the underſtanding is never more bright, clear, apprehenſive, and perfect, than when the body, in an extaſy, is laid aſide, as to any uſe or aſſiſtance of the mind: The ſoul for that ſpace uſes not the body's aſſiſtance, as the very words *extaſy* and *rapture* convince us.

2. ‖ To underſtand by *ſpecies*, doth not agree to the ſoul naturally and neceſſarily, but by accident, as it is now in union with the body: Were it but once looſed from the body, it would underſtand better without them, than ever it did in the body by them. A man that is on horſeback, muſt move according to the motion of the horſe he rids; but if he were on foot, he then uſes his own proper motion as he pleaſeth; ſo here. But though we grant the ſoul doth in many caſes now make uſe of phantaſms, and that the agitation of the ſpirits, which are in the brain and heart, are conjunct with its acts of cogitation and intellection: Yet, as a ſearching † ſcholar well obſerves, the ſp its are rather ſubjects than inſtruments of thoſe actions; and the whole eſſence of thoſe acts is antecedent to the motion of the ſpirits: As when we uſe a pen in writing, or a knife in cutting, there is an operation of the ſoul upon them, before there can be any operation of the ſoul upon them, before there can be any

‡ The underſtanding contemplates objects incorporeal and immaterial, ſuch as God and intelligent beings. But theſe by no means affect the phantaſy, for they are beyond the reach of corporeal powers. *Conimb. on the ſoul. l.* 3. *c.* 8. *q.* 8.

‖ For if this belongs not to the nature of the ſoul, but by accident agrees to it, namely from this, that it is tied to the body, as the Platoniſts affirm, then the queſtion is eaſily ſolved. For the ſoul being looſed from the body, will return to its own nature. *Aquin. p.* 1. *Q.* 8. *Art.* 1.

† Howe's *Bleſſedneſs. p.* 174, 175.

operation by them: They act as they are first acted, and so do these bodily spirits. So that to speak properly, the body is bettered by the use the soul makes of it in these its noble actions; but the soul is not advantaged by being tied to such a body; it can do its own work without it; its operations follow its essence, not the body to which it is for a time united.

Upon the whole; it is much more absonous and difficult to conceive a stupified, benummed, and unactive soul, whose very nature is to be active, lively, and always in motion, than it is to conceive a soul freed from the shackles and clogs of the body, acting freely according to its own nature. I wish the favourers of this opinion may take heed, lest it carry them farther than they intend, even to a denial of its existence and immortality, and turn them into downright *Somatists* or *Atheists*.

Proposition 6. *That the separated souls of the just having finished all their work of obedience on earth, and the Spirit having finished all his work of sanctification upon them, they ascend to God, with all the habits of Grace inherent in them; and all the comfortable improvements of their graces accompanying and following them.*

This proposition is to be opened and confirmed in these four branches.

(1.) When a gracious soul is separated from the body, all its work of obedience in this world is finished. Therefore death is called the "finishing of our course," Acts xx. 24. "The "night when man works no more," John ix. 4. "There is no "working in the grave," Eccl. ix. 10. for death dissolves the *compositum*, and removes the soul immediately to another world, where it can act for itself only, but not for others, as it was wont to do on earth. "I shall see man no more (saith Heze-"kiah) with the inhabitants of the world," Isa. xxxviii. 11. That which was said of David's death, is as true of every Christian, that "having served his generation according to the will "of God, he fell asleep," Acts xiii. 36.

I do not say this lower world receives no benefit at all by them after their death? for though they can speak no more, write no more, pray for, and instruct the inhabitants of this world no more, nor exhibit to them the beauty of religion in any new acts or examples of theirs (which is what I mean by saying *they have finished all their work of obedience on earth*); yet the benefit of what they did whilst in the body, still remains after they are gone: As the apostle speaks of Abel, Heb. xi. 4. "Who being dead, yet speaketh." This way indeed a-

bundance of ſervice will be done for the ſouls of men upon earth, long after they are gone to heaven. And this ſhould greatly quicken us to leave as much as we can behind us, for the good of poſterity, that *after our deceaſe* (as the apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 Pet. i. 15.) they may have our words and examples in remembrance. But for any ſervice to be done *de novo*, after death, it is not to be expected: We have accompliſhed, as a hireling, our day, and have not a ſtroke more to do.

(2.) As all our work of obedience is then finiſhed by us, ſo at death all the work of God is finiſhed by his Spirit upon us. The laſt hand is then put to all the preparatory work for glory, not a ſtroke more to be done upon it afterwards; which appears as well by the immediate ſucceſſion of the life of glory, (whereof I ſhall ſpeak in another propoſition) as by the ceſſation of all ſanctifying means and inſtruments, which are totally laid aſide as things of no more uſe after this ſtroke is given; *Adepto fine, ceſſant media*, means are uſeleſs when the end is attained. *There is no work* (ſaith Solomon) *in the grave*. How ſhort ſoever the ſoul's ſtay and abode in the body was, though it were regenerated one day, and ſeparate the next, yet all is wrought upon it, which God ever intended ſhould be wrought in this world, and there is no preparation-work in the other world.

(3.) But though the ſoul leave all the means of grace behind it, yet it carries away with it to heaven all thoſe habits of grace which were planted and improved in it in this world, by the bleſſing of the Spirit upon thoſe means: Though it leaves the ordinances, it loſeth not the effects and fruits of them; though they ceaſe, their effects ſtill live. "The truth dwelleth in us, "and ſhall be in us for ever," 1 John ii. 17. "The ſeed of "God remaineth in us," 1 John iii. 9.

Common gifts fail at death; but ſaving grace ſticks faſt in the ſoul, and aſcends with it into glory. Gracious habits are inſeparable; glory doth not deſtroy, but perfect them: They are the ſoul's meetneſs for heaven, Col. i. 12. and therefore it ſhall not come into his preſence, leaving its meetneſs behind it. In vain is all the work of the Spirit upon us in this world, if we carry it not along with us into that world, ſeeing all his works upon us in this life have a reſpect and relation to the life to come.

Look, therefore, as the ſame natural faculties and powers which the ſoul had (though it could not uſe them) in its imperfect body in the womb, came with it into this world, where they freely exerted themſelves in the moſt noble actions of natural life; ſo the habits of grace, which, by regeneration, are

here implanted in a weak and imperfect ſoul, go with it to glory, where they exert themſelves in a more high and perfect way of acting than ever they did here below. The languiſhing ſpark of love is there a vehement flame; the faint, remiſs and infrequent delight in God, is there at a conſtant, raviſhing and tranſporting height.

(4.) To conclude, As all implanted habits of grace aſcend with the ſanctified ſoul to heaven; (for the ſoul aſcends not thither as a natural, but as a new creature) ſo all the effects, reſults, and ſweet improvements of thoſe graces which we gathered as the pleaſant fruits of them on earth, theſe accompany and follow the ſoul into the other world alſo; "Their works follow "them," Rev. xiv. 13. They go not before in the notion of merits, to make way for them, but they follow or accompany them as evidences, and comfortable experiences. I doubt not, but the very remembrance of what paſſed betwixt God and the ſoul here, betwixt the day of its eſpouſals to Chriſt, and its divorce from the body, will be one ſweet ingredient in their bleſſedneſs and joy, when they ſhall be ſinging in the upper region the ſong of Moſes and of the Lamb. They were never given to be loſt, or left behind us. And thus you ſee with what a rich cargo the ſoul ſails to the other world, though if it had no other, it would never drop anchor there.

Propoſition 7. *The ſouls of the juſt when ſeparated from their bodies, do not wander up and down in this world, nor hover about the ſepulchres where their bodies lie; nor are they detained in any purgatory, in order to their more perfect purification; nor do they fall aſleep in a benummed ſtupid ſtate: but do forthwith paſs into glory, and are immediately with the Lord.*

When once the mind of man leaves the ſcripture-guidance and direction, which is to it what the compaſs or pole-ſtar is to a ſhip in the wide ocean, whither will it not wander? In what uncertainties will it not fluctuate? and upon what rocks and quick-ſands muſt it inevitably be caſt? Many have been the fooliſh and groundleſs conceits and fancies of men about the receptacles of departed ſouls.

1. Some have aſſigned them a reſtleſs wandering life, now here, now there, without any certain dwelling-place any where. The only grounds for this fancy, is the frequent apparitions of the ghoſts or ſpirits of the dead, whereof many inſtances are given; and who is there that is a ſtranger to ſuch ſtories? Now, if departed ſouls were fixed any where, this world would be quiet and free from ſuch diſturbances.

I make no doubt, but very many of theſe ſtories, have been the induſtrious fictions and devices of wicked and ſuperſtitious votaries, to gain reputation to their way, ſpeaking lies in hypocriſy, to draw diſciples after them. And many others have been the tricks and impoſtures of Satan himſelf, to ſhake the credit of the ſaints reſt in heaven, and the impriſonment of ungodly ſouls in hell, as will more fully appear when I come to ſpeak to that queſtion more particularly.

2. Others think, when they are looſed from the body at death, they hover about the graves and ſolitary places where their bodies lie, as willing, ſeeing they can dwell no longer in them, to abide as near them as they can; juſt as the ſurviving turtle keeps near the place where his mate died, and may be heard mourning for a long time about that part of the wood. This opinion ſeeks countenance and protection from that law, Deut. xviii. 10, 11. which prohibits men to conſult with the dead; of which reſtraint there had been no need or uſe, if it had not been practiſed; and ſuch practices had never been continued, if departed ſouls had not frequented thoſe places, and given anſwers to their queſtions. But what I ſaid before of Satan's impoſtures, is enough for the preſent to return to this alſo.

3. The Papiſts ſend them immediately to purgatory, in order to their more thorough purification. This purgatory * Bellarmine thus deſcribes: "It is a certain place wherein, as in a "priſon, ſouls are purged after this life, that were not fully "purged here, to the intent they may enter pure into heaven; "and tho' the church (ſaith he) hath not defined the place, yet "the ſchoolmen ſay, it is in the bowels of the earth, and upon "the borders of hell." And, to countenance this profitable fable, divers ſcriptures are by them abuſed and miſapplied, as 1 Cor. iii. 15. Matth. v. 25, 26. 1 Pet. iii. 19. All which have been fully reſcued out of their hands, and abundantly vindicated by our divines, who have proved, God never kindled that fire to purify ſouls; but the *Pope* to warm his own *kitchen*.

4. Another ſort there are, who affirm, they neither wander about this world, nor go into purgatory, but are caſt by death into a ſwoon or ſleep; remaining in a kind of benummed condition, till the reſurrection of the body. This was the error of Beryllus; and Irenaeus ſeems to border too near upon it, when he ſaith †, "The ſouls of diſciples ſhall go to an inviſible place

* *Bellarmin lib. 2. de Purg. cap. 6.*

† *Diſcipulorum animæ abibunt in inviſibilem locum, definitum*

eis

"appointed for them of God, and shall there tarry till the re-
"surrection, waiting for that time: and then receiving their
"bodies, and perfectly, *(i. e.)* corporeally, rising again, as
"Christ did, they shall come to the sight of God."

All these mistakes will fall together by one stroke; for if it evidently appear (as I hope it will) that the spirits of the just are immediately taken to God, and do converse with, and enjoy him in heaven; then all these fancies vanish, without any more labour about them particularly. Now there are four considerations which to me put the immediate glorification of the departed souls of believers beyond all rational doubt.

1. Heaven is as ready and fit to receive them as ever it shall be.

2. They are as ready and fit for heaven as ever they will be.

3. The scripture is plainly for it. And,

4. There is nothing in reason against it.

1. Heaven is as fit and ready to receive them, when they die, as ever it shall be. Heaven is prepared for believers, (1.) By the purpose and decree of God, and so far it was prepared from the foundation of the world, Matth. xxv. 34. (2.) By the death of Christ, whose blood made the purchase of it for believers, and so meritoriously opened the gates thereof, which our sins had barred up against us, Heb. x. 19, 20. (3.) By the ascension of Christ into that holy place, as our representative and forerunner, John xiv. 2. This is all that is necessary to be done for the preparation of heaven; and all this is done, as much as ever God designed should be done to it, in order to its preparation for our souls: so that no delay can be upon that account.

2. The departed souls of believers are as ready for heaven as ever they will be: for there is no preparation-work to be done by them, or upon them after death, John ix. 3. Eccl. ix. 10. Their justification was complete before death, and now their sanctification is so too; sin, which came in by the union, going out at the separation of their souls and bodies. They are *spirits made perfect.*

3. The scripture is plain and full for their immediate glorification; Luke xxiii. 43. "To day shalt thou be with me in "paradise." Luke xvi. 22. "The beggar died, and was car-

eis a Deo; et ibi usque ad resurrectionem commorabuntur, justi-nentes resurrectionem; post, recipientes corpora, et perfecte refur-gentes, i. e. *corporaliter, quemadmodum et Dominus resurrexit, sic venient ad conspectum Dei,* Iren. lib. 5.

" ried by the angels into Abraham's boſom." Phil. i. 21. "I " deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is far " better." The ſcripture ſpeaks but of two ways, by which ſouls ſee, and enjoy God, *viz.* Faith and ſight; the one imperfect, ſuited to this life; the other perfect, fitted for the life to come; and this immediately ſucceeding that, for the imperfect is done away, by the coming of that which is perfect, as the twilight is done away, by the advancing of the perfect day.

4. To conclude; there is nothing in reaſon lying in bar to it. It hath been proved before, that the ſoul in its unbodied ſtate, is capable to enjoy bleſſedneſs, and can perform its acts of intellection, volition, *&c.* not only as well, but much better than it did, when embodied. I conclude therefore, that ſeeing heaven is already as much prepared for believers, as it need be, or can be; and they as much prepared from the time of their diſſolution, as ever they ſhall be; the ſcriptures alſo being ſo plain for it, and no bar in reaſon againſt it; all the forementioned opinions are but the dreams and fancies of men, who have forſaken their ſcripture-guide; and this remains an unſhaken truth, that the ſpirits of the juſt go immediately to glory, from the time of their ſeparation.

Propoſition 8. *At the time of a gracious ſoul's ſeparation from the body, it is inſtantly and perfectly freed from ſin, which, till that time, dwelt in it from its beginning; but thenceforth ſhall do ſo no more.*

Immediately upon their ſeparation from the body, they are ſpirits *made perfect*, as my text ſtiles them; and that epithet * *perfect* could never ſuit them, if there were any remaining root or habit of corruption in them.

The time, yea, the ſet time is now come, to put an end to all the dolorous groans of gracious ſouls, upon the account of indwelling ſin. What the angel ſaid to Joſhua, Zech. iii. 3, 4. the ſame doth God ſay of every upright ſoul, at the time of its ſeparation, " Take away the filthy garments from him, and " cloath him with change of raiments, and ſet a fair mitre upon " his head." Thus the garments ſpotted with the fleſh, are taken away with the body of fleſh, and the pure unchangeable robes of perfect holineſs, cloathed upon the ſoul, in which it appears without fault before the throne of God, Rev. xiv. 5.

* Therefore he calls them conſecrated or perfect, becauſe they are no more ſubject to the infirmities of the fleſh, the fleſh itſelf being laid aſide. *Marlorate on the place.*

There is a threefold burdenſome evil in ſin under which all regenerated ſouls groan in this life; *viz.* (1.) The guilt; (2.) The filth; (3.) The inherence of it in their nature. And there is a threefold remedy or cure of theſe evils: the guilt of ſin is remedied by juſtification; the filth of ſin is inchoatively healed by ſanctification: the inherence of ſin is totally eradicated by glorification; For as it entred into our perſons by the union of our ſouls and bodies, ſo it is perfectly caſt out by their diſunion or ſeparation at death: the laſt ſtroke is then given to the work of ſanctification, and the laſt is evermore the perfecting ſtroke: ſin languiſhed under imperfect ſanctification in the time of life, but it gives up the ghoſt under perfected ſanctification, from and after death: ſanctification gave it its deadly wound, but glorification its final abolition. For it is with our ſins after regeneration, as it was with that beaſt mentioned, Dan. vii. 12. which, though it was "wounded with a deadly wound, yet its life was "prolonged for a ſeaſon." And this is the appointed ſeaſon for its expiration. For if at their diſſolution they are immediately received into glory (as it hath been proved they are, in our ſeventh propoſition) they muſt neceſſarily be freed from ſin, immediately upon their diſſolution; becauſe, nothing that is unclean can enter into that pure and holy place; they muſt be, as the text truly repreſents them, "the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect."

For, if ſo great holineſs and purity be required in all that draw nigh to God upon earth, as you read, Pſal. xciii. 5. certainly, thoſe who are admitted immediately to his throne, muſt be without fault, according to Rev. vii. 14, 15, 16, 17.

When a compounded being comes to be diſſolved, each part returns to its own principle; ſo it is here: the ſpirit of man, and all the grace that is in it, came from God; and to him they return at death, and are perfected in him and by him: the fleſh returns to earth, whence it came, and all that body of ſin is deſtroyed with it; neither the one or other ſhall be a ſnare or clog to the ſoul any more. A Chriſtian in this world, is but gold in the ore; at death, the pure gold is melted out and ſeparated, and the droſs caſt away and conſumed.

Hence three conſectaries offer themſelves to us.

Conſectary 1. That a believer's life and warfare end together. We lay not down our weapons of war, till we lie down in the duſt, 2 Tim. iv. 7. "I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed "my courſe." The courſe and conflict you ſee are finiſhed together: though they commence from different terms, yet they always terminate together. Grace and ſin have each acted its part upon the ſtage of time, and the victory hovered doubtfully, ſome-

times over sin, and sometimes over grace; but now the war is ended, and the quarrel decided, grace keeps its ground, and sin is finally vanquished. Now, and never before, the gracious soul stands triumphing like that noble *Argive*,

In vacuo solus sessor plausorque theatro.

not an enemy left to renew the combat; the war is ended, and with it all the fears and sorrows of the saints.

Corollary 2. Separated souls become impeccable, or free from all the hazard of sin, from the time of their separation: for, there being no root of sin now inherent in them, consequently no temptation to sin can fasten upon them; all temptations have their handles in the corruptions of our natures: did not Satan find matter prepared within us, dry tinder fitted to his hand, he might strike in temptations long enough, before one of his hellish sparks could catch or fasten upon us. Temptations are grievous exercises to believers; they are darts, Eph. vi. 16. they are thorns, 2 Cor. xii. 7. But the separate soul is out of gunshot: it were as good discharge an arrow at the body of the sun, as a temptation at a translated soul.

Corollary 3. Separated souls are more lovely companions, and their converses more sweet and delightful than ever they were in this world. It was their corruption which spoiled their communion on earth; and it is their spotless holiness which makes it incomparably pleasant in heaven. The best and loveliest saints have something in them which is distasteful; even sweet briars and holy thistles have their offensive prickles: but when that which was so lovely on earth is made perfect in heaven, and nothing of that remains in heaven, which was so offensive in them on earth; O what blessed, delightful companions will they be! O blessed society! O most desirable companions! let my soul for ever be united to their assembly. I love them under their corruptions; but how shall my soul be knit to them, when it seeth them shining in their perfections?

Proposition 9. *The pleasure and delights of the separate spirits of the just, are incomparably greater and sweeter than those they did, or at any time could experience in their bodily state.*

With what a pleasant face would death smile upon believers! what roses would it raise in its pale cheeks, if this proposition were but well settled in our hearts by faith! And if we will not be wanting to ourselves, it may be firmly settled there, by these four considerations, which demonstrate it.

Consideration 1. *Whatsoever pleasure any man receives in this world, he receives it by means of his soul.* Even all corporeal and sensitive delights have no other relish and sweetness, but what

the soul gives them: which is demonstrable by this; that if a man be placed amidst all the pleasing objects and circumstances in the world, if he were in that centre, where he might have the confluence of all the delights of this world: yet if the spirit be wounded, there is no more relish or savour in them, than in the white of an egg. What pleasure had Spira in his liberty, estate, wife and children; these things were indeed proposed and urged, again and again, to relieve him; but instead of pleasure they became his horror: let but the mind be wounded, and all the mirth is marred; one touch from God upon the spirit, destroys all the joy of this world. Nay,

Let but the intention of the mind be strongly carried another way, and for that time, (though there be no guilt or wound upon the soul) the most pleasant enjoyments lose their pleasure. What delight, think you, would bags of gold, sumptuous feasts, or exquisite melody have afforded to Archimedes, when he was wholly intent upon his mathematical lines? By this then it is evident, that the rise of all pleasure is in the mind, and the most agreeable and pleasing objects and enjoyments signify nothing without it: the mind must be found in itself, and at leisure to attend them, or we can have no pleasure from them.

Consideration 2. *Of all natural pleasures in the world, intellectual pleasures are found to be most agreeable, and connatural to the soul of man.*

The more refined and remote from sense any pleasure is, the more grateful is it to the soul; those are certainly the sweetest delights that spring out of the mind. A drop of intellectual pleasure is valued by a generous and well-tempered soul, above the whole ocean of impure joys, which come to it sophisticated, and tanged through the muddy channels of sense.

No sensualists in the world can extract such pleasure out of gold, silver, meat and drink; as a searching and contemplating mind finds in the discovery of truth. * Heinsius that learned library-keeper of Leyden, professed, "That when he had shut "up himself among so many illustrious souls, he seemed to sit "down there, as in the very lap of eternity, and heartily pitied "the rich and covetous worldlings, that were strangers to his "delights."

* *In qua simulac pedem posui, foribus pessulum obdo, et in ipso æternitas gremio, inter tot illustres animas sedem mihi sumo, cum ingenti quidem animo: ut subinde magnatum misereat, qui hanc felicitatem ignorant.* Epist. Prin.

And † Cardan tells us, "That to know the secrets of nature, and the order of the universe, hath greater pleasure and sweetness in it, than the thought of man can fathom, or any mortal hope for." "Yea, such beauty, saith ‡ Plutarch, there is in the study of the *mathematics*, that it were unworthy to compare such baubles and bubbles as riches with it." "Yea, saith another, it were a sweet thing to be extinguished in those studies ‖."

Julius Scaliger was so delighted with poetry, that he protested he had rather be the author of twelve verses in Lucan, than emperor of Germany. And to say truth, "there is a kind of enchanting sweetness in those intellectual pleasures, and feasts of the mind; such a delight as hardly suffers the mind to be pulled away from it *." These pleasures have a finer edge, a higher gust, a more agreeable savour to the mind than sensitive ones; as approaching much nearer to the nature of the soul, which is spiritual.

Consideration 3. And as intellectual pleasures do as far exceed all sensitive pleasures, as those which are proper to a man, do those which we have in common with beasts; *So divine pleasures do again much more surmount intellectual ones.* For what compare is there betwixt those joys which surprise a scholar in the discovery of the secrets of nature, and those that overwhelm and swallow up the Christian in the discovery of the glorious mysteries of redemption by Christ, and his own personal interest therein!

To solve the *phaenomena* of nature is pleasant, but to solve all the difficulties about our title to Christ and his covenant, that is ravishing. Archimedes his εὕρηκα, I have found it, was but the frisk, or skip of a boy, to that rapturous voice of the spouse, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." These are entertainments for angels, 1 Pet. i. 11. a short salvation for the season it is felt and tasted, 1 Pet. i. 8. after these delights, all others are insipid and dry. And yet one step higher,

Consideration 4. *All that divine pleasure, which ever the*

† *Arcana cœli, naturæ secreta, ordinem universi scire; majoris felicitatis et dulcedinis est, quam cogitatione quis assequi potest, aut mortalis sperare.*

‡ *Talis est mathematum pulchritudo, et his indignum sit divitiarum phaleras istas et bullas et puerilia spectacula comparari.*

‖ *Dulce est extingui mathematicarum artium studio.* Leon. Diggs.

* *Talis suavitas, ut cum quis ea degustaverit, quasi Circeis poculis captus, non potest unquam ab illis divelli.* Cardan.

holiest, and devoutest soul enjoyed in the body, is but a sip or prelibation, compared with those full draughts it hath in the unbodied state.

Whilst it is embodied, it rejoiceth in the earnests and pledges of joy; but when it is unbodied, it receives the full sum; Psal. xvi. 11. "In thy presence is fulness of joy." This fulness of joy is not to be expected, because not to be supported in this world. The joy of heaven would quickly make the hoops of nature fly. When a good man had but a little more than ordinary joy of the Lord poured into his soul, he was heard to cry, Hold, Lord, hold! thy poor creature is but a clay vessel, and can hold no more! These pleasures the soul hath in the body, are of the same kind indeed with those in heaven, but are exceeding short of them in divers others respects.

1. The spiritual pleasures the soul hath in the body, are but by reflection; but those it enjoys out of the body, are by immediate *intuition*, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. now in a glass, then face to face.

2. The pleasures it now hath, though they be of a divine nature, yet they are relished by the vitiated appetite of a sick and distempered soul; the embodied soul is diseased and sickly, it hath many distempers hanging about it. Now we know the most pleasant things lose much of their pleasure to a sick man; the separate soul is made perfect, thoroughly cured of all diseases, restored to its perfect health; and consequently, divine pleasures must needs have a higher gust, and relish in heaven, than ever they had on earth.

3. The pleasures of a gracious soul on earth are but rare and seldom, meeting with many and long interruptions. And many of them occasioned by the body, which often calls down the soul to attend its necessities, and converse with things of a far different nature; but from these, and all other ungrateful and prejudicial avocations, the separated soul is discharged and set free; so that its whole eternity is spent in the highest delights.

4. The highest pleasures of a gracious soul in the body, are but the pleasures of an uncentered soul, which is still gravitating and striving forward, and, consequently, can be but low, and very imperfect, in comparison with those it enjoys, when it is centered and fixed in its everlasting rest. They differ as the shadow of the labourer, for an hour in the day, from his rest in his bed, when his work is ended.

To conclude; the pleasures it hath here, are but the pleasures of hope and expectation, which cannot bear any propor-

tion to those of sight and full fruition. O see the advantages of an unbodied state!

Proposition 10. *That gracious souls, separate from the body, do attain to the perfection of knowledge, with more ease than they attained any small degree of knowledge whilst they dwelt in the body.*

Great are the inconveniences, and prejudices, under which souls labour, in their pursuits after knowledge in this life, *Veritas in puteo*, Truth lies deep. And it is hard, even with much labour, pains and study, to pump up one clear notion; for the soul cannot now act as it would, but is fain to act as it can, according to the limitations and permissions of the body, to which it is confined: By heedful observations, and painful searches it is forced to deduce one thing from another, and is too often deceived, and imposed upon by such tedious and manifold connections.

Beside, truth is now forced, in compliance with our weakness, and distance from the fountain, to descend from heaven under vails *, shadows and umbrages, thereby to contract some kind of affinity with our fancies and exterior senses first, that so it may with more advantage transmit itself to our understanding. It must come under some vail or other to us, whilst we are vailed with mortality, because the soul cannot behold it with its native lustre, nor converse otherwise with it.

And hence it was that Augustine made his rational conjecture, Why men used to be so much delighted with metaphors, because they are so much proportioned to our senses, with which our reason, in this embodied state, hath contracted such an intimacy and familiarity: but when the soul lays aside its vail of flesh, truth also puts off her vail, and shews the soul her naked, beautiful, and ravishing face; it henceforth beholds all truth in God, the fountain of truth. There are five ways by which men attain the knowledge of God, say the schools, four of which the soul makes use of in this world; but the fifth, which is the most perfect, is reserved for the separate state. Men discern God here,

(1.) *In vestigio*, By his footsteps in the works of creation. God hath impress the marks of his wisdom and power upon the creatures, by which impressions we discern that God hath been

* The light from above never descends without a vail: for it is impossible that divine light could otherwise shine to us, unless it is covered with a variety of sacred shadowings. *Dionys. Areop. de cœlest. Hier.* c. 1.

there. Thus the very Heathens arrive to some knowledge of a God, Rom. i. 20. Acts xvii. 24, 27.

(2.) *In umbra*, By his shadow: if you see the shadow of a man, you guess at his stature and dimensions thereby. Thus Christ made some discovery of himself to the world, in the *Mosaical* ceremonies, and antient types and umbrages, Heb. x. 1.

(3.) *In speculo*, In a glass: This gives us a much clearer representation of a person, than either his *footsteps* or *shadow* could: this is an imperfect or darker vision of his face, by way of reflection. And thus God is seen in his word and ordinances, wherein, "as in a glass, we behold the glory of the Lord," 2 Cor. iii. 18.

(4.) *In Filio*, in his own Son, who is the living image and express character of his Father. Thus we sometimes see a child so lively representing his father in speech, gate, gesture, and every lineament of his face, that we may say,

Sic oculos, sic ille manus, sic ora ferebat.

Just so his father spake, so he went, and just such a one he was.

Thus we know God in the face of Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6. who is the express image of his Father, Heb. i. 3. and John xiv. 9. This is the highest way of attaining the knowledge of God in this life. But then, in the unbodied state, we see him,

(5.) *Face to face*, with a direct vision. This is to *see him as he is*. The believer is a candidate for this degree now, but cannot be invested with it, till it be divested of this body of flesh. Yet the soul, when unbodied, and made perfect, attaineth, not to a comprehensive knowledge of God, for it will still remain a finite being, and so cannot comprehend that which is infinite. That question, Job xi. 7. "Canst thou find out the Almighty "unto perfection?" may be put to the highest graduate in heaven. And yet,

1. To see God face to face, and know him as he is, will be a knowledge of the divine essence itself. To see the divine essence, is to see God as he is; *i. e.* to see him so perfectly, and fully, that the understanding can proceed no farther in point of knowledge, concerning that great question, *What is God?* Thus no man hath seen or can see God in this world. Even Moses himself could not see God, Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19, 20. But the spirits of the just made perfect, have satisfying apprehensions, though not perfect comprehensions of the divine essence.

2. In this light they clearly discern those deep mysteries which they here racked their thoughts upon, but could not penetrate in this life. There they will know what is to be known

of the union of the two natures in the wonderful person of our Emmanuel; and the manner of the subsistence of each person, in the most glorious and undivided Godhead, John xiv. 20. The several attributes of God will then be unfolded to our understandings; for his essence and attributes are not two things, Rev. iv. 8, 9, 10, 11. Oh! what a ravishing sight will this be!

The mysteries of the scriptures, and providences of God, will be no mysteries then: Curiosity itself will be there satisfied.

3. This immediate knowledge, and sight of God face to face, will be infinitely more sweet, and ravishingly pleasant, than any, or all the views we had of him here by faith ever were, or possibly could be. There is a joy unspeakable in the visions of faith, 1 Pet. i. 8. but it comes far short of the facial vision. Who can tell the full importance of that one text, Rev. xxii. 4. "The throne of the Lamb shall be in it, and they shall see "his face?" Oh! for such a heaven (said one) as to get one glimpse of that lovely face! Earth cannot bear such sights. This light overwhelms, and confounds the inadequate faculties of imperfect and embodied souls. But there is *lumen confortans*, a chearing, strengthening, pleasant light, as the light of *the morning-star*, Rev. ii. 28.

4. This sight of God will be appropriative, and applicative. We there see him as our own God, and portion. Without a clear interest in him, the sight of him could never be beatifical, and satisfying. Sight without interest is like the light of a glow-worm, light without heat. All doubts and objections are solved, and answered, in the first sight of this blessed face.

5. To conclude: This perfect, and most comfortable knowledge, is attained without labour by the separate soul. Here every degree of knowledge was with the price of much pains. How many weary hours, and aking heads, did the acquisition of a little knowledge stand us in! But then it flows in upon the soul easily. It was the saying of a great usurer, *I once took much pains to get a little*, (meaning the first stock) *but now I get much without any pains at all.* Oh lovely state of separation! That body which interposed, clogged, and clouded the willing and capable spirit, being drawn aside (as a curtain) by death, the light of glory now shines upon it, and round about it, without any interception, or lett.

Proposition 11. *The separated souls of the just do live in a more high and excellent way of communion with God, in his temple-worship in heaven, than ever they did in the sweetest gospel-ord-*

inces, and moſt ſpiritual duties, in which they converſed with im here on earth.

That ſaints on earth have real communion with God, and hat this communion is the joy of their hearts, the life of their ife, and their relief under all preſſures and troubles in this life, s a truth ſo firmly ſealed upon their hearts by experience, as well as clearly revealed in the word, that there can remain no loubt about it, among thoſe that have any ſaving acquaintance with the life and power of religion.

This communion with God is of that precious value with believers, that it unſpeakably endears all thoſe duties and ordinances to them, which, as means and inſtruments, are uſeful to maintain it.

At death, the people of God part with all thoſe precious ordinances and duties, they being only deſigned for, and fitted to the preſent ſtate of imperfection, Eph. iv. 12, 13. but not at all to their loſs, no more than it is to his that loſes the light of his candle, by the riſing of the ſun. A candle, a ſtar is comfortable in the night; but uſeleſs when the ſun is up, and in its meridian glory. Chriſtian, pray much, hear much, and be as much as thou canſt among the ordinances of God, and duties of religion: For, the time is at hand that you ſhall ſerve, and wait on God no more this way.

But yet think not your ſouls ſhall be diſcharged from all worſhip, and ſervice of God, when you die: No, you will find heaven to be a temple built for worſhip, and the worſhip there to be much tranſcendent to all that in which you were here employed. The ſanctuary was a pattern of heaven in this very reſpect, Heb. ix. 23. And, on this very account, it is called *Sion* in my text, and the *heavenly Jeruſalem*; as denoting a church-ſtate, and the ſpiritual worſhip there performed by the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.

Some help we may have to underſtand the nature thereof, by comparing it with that worſhip and ſervice which we perform to God here, in this ſtate of imperfection, and by conſidering the agreements, and diſagreements betwixt them. In this they agree, that the worſhip above, and below, are both addreſſed, and directed to one and the ſame object, Father, Son, and Spirit; all centers, and terminates in God. They alſo agree in the general quality, and common nature; they are both ſpiritual worſhip. But there are divers remarkable differences betwixt the one and the other, as will be manifeſt in the following collation.

1. All our worſhip on earth is performed, and tranſacted by

faith, as the instrument, and means thereof, Heb. xi. 6. "He "that cometh to God must believe," &c. In heaven, faith ceaseth, and sight takes place of it, 1 Cor. v. 7. There we see, what here we only believe. There are now before us ordinances, scriptures, ministers, and the assemblies of saints in the places of worship: But if we have any communion with God, by, or among these, we must set ourselves to believe those things we see not. By realizing, and applying invisible things, we here get sometimes, and with no small pains, a taste of heaven, and a transient glance of that glory. In this service our faith is put hard to it, it must work and fight at once; resolutely act whilst sense and reason stand by, contradicting and quarreling with it. And if, with much ado, we get but one sensible touch of heaven upon our spirits, if we get a little spiritual warmth, and melting of our affections towards God, we call that day a good day, and it is so indeed.

But in heaven all things are carried at a high rate, the joy of the Lord overflows us without any labour, or pain of ours to procure it. We may say of it there, as the prophet speaks of the dew, and showers upon the grass, "which tarrieth not for "man, nor waiteth for the sons of men," Micah v. 7.

2. No grace is, or can be acted here, without the clog of a contrary corruption, Rom. vii. 21. "When I would do good, "evil is present with me." Every beam of faith is presently darkened by a cloud of unbelief, Mark ix. 24. "Lord, I be-"lieve, help thou my unbelief." "We often read in the book "of experience (saith * one) what an inconsistent fickle thing "the heart is in duties: Now it is with us, by and by it is fled "away and gone; we know not where to find it: It is con-"stant only in its inconstancy and lubricity." There is iniquity in our most holy things, which needs pardon, Exod. xxviii. 38. Our best duties have enough in them to damn us, as well as our worst sins: But in that perfect state above, grace flows purely out of the soul, as beams do from the sun, or chrystal streams from the purest fountain. No impure, or imperfect acts proceed from spirits made perfect.

3. Here the graces of the saints are never, or very rarely acted, in their highest and most intense degree. When they love God most fervently, there is some coldness in their love. Who comes up to the height of that rule, Mat. xxii. 37. "Thou shalt love

* *Sæpe in libro experientiæ leginus quomodo a corde nostro re-linquimur: Nunc est obiscum, nunc alibi; nunc evolat, nunc re-curit: in sola lubricitate manent.* Bern.

" the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and all thy mind, and " all thy strength?" When we meditate on God, it is not in the depth of our thoughts, without some wanderings and extravagancies; 'tis very hard, if not impossible, for the soul to stand long in its full bent to God.

But in heaven it doth so, and will do so for ever, without any relaxation or remission of its fervour. Christ, among the saints and angels in heaven, is as a mighty load-stone cast in among many needles, which leap to him, and fix themselves inseparably upon him. They all act in glory as the fire doth here, to the utmost of their power and ability. There is no note lower than glory to God in the highest.

(4.) The most spiritual souls on earth, who live most with God, have, and must have their daily and frequent intermissions. The necessities of the body, as well as the defectiveness of their graces, require, and necessitate it to be so. Our hands with Moses will hang down and grow weary. Our affections will cool and fall, do what we can.

But as the spirits of just men made perfect know no remissions in the degree, so neither any intermissions in the acting of their grace: " They shall serve him day and night in his temple," Rev. vii. 15. You that would purchase the continuance of your spiritual comforts but for a day, with all that you have in this world, will there enjoy them at full, without any intermitting, through eternity.

5. If the best hearts on earth be at any time more than ordinarily enlarged in spiritual comforts, they need presently some humbling providence to hide pride from their eyes. Even Paul himself must have a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him. Bernard could never perform any duty with comfortable enlargement, but he seemed to hear his own heart whisper thus, *Bene feciſti, Bernarde,* O well done, Bernard.

But, in heaven the highest comforts are enjoyed in the deepest humility; and the entire glory is ascribed to God, without any unworthy desalcations. Rev. iv. 10. They put not the crown upon their own heads, but Christ's: They cast down their own crowns, and fall down at the feet of him that sitteth upon the throne.

6. All assemblies for worship in this world are mixed; they consist of regenerate and unregenerate, living and dead souls: This spoils the harmony, and allays the comfort of mutual communion. In a congregation consisting of a thousand persons, Ah! how few comparatively are there that are heartily con-

cerned in the duty? But it is not so above. There are ten thousand times ten thousand, even thousands of thousands before the throne, loving, adoring, praising, and triumphing together, and not a jarring string in all their harps.

7. Here the worship of God is impured, mixed, and adulterated by the sinful additions and inventions of men. This gracious souls groan under as a heavy burden, sighing and praying for reformation; as knowing they can expect no more of God's presence, than there is of his order and institution in worship. But, above, all the worship is pure, the least pin in the heavenly *tabernacle* is according to the perfect pattern of the divine will.

8. We have here duties of divers kinds and natures to perform. All our time is not to be spent in loving, praising, and delighting in God; but we must turn ourselves also to searching, watching, and soul-humbling work. Sometimes we are called to get up our hearts to the highest praise, and then to humble them to the dust for sin and judgments; one while to sing his praises, and another while to sigh even to the breaking of our loins: But the spirits of just men made perfect, have but one kind of employment, *viz.* praising, loving, and delighting in God. There is no groaning, sighing, searching, or watching-work, in that state.

9. The most illuminated believers on earth have but dark and crude apprehensions of Christ's intercession work in heaven, or of the way and manner in which it is there performed by him. We know indeed that our High-priest is for us entered within the vail, Heb. vi. 20. That he appears in that most holy place for us, Heb. ix. 24. That he there represents his sufferings for us to God, standing before him as a lamb that had been slain, Rev. v. 6. That he offers up our prayers with his incense to God, Rev. viii. 3.

But the immediate intuition of the whole performance, by the person of Christ in heaven, the beholding of him in his work there, with the smiles and honours, the delight and satisfaction of the Father in his person and work: Certainly, this must be a far different thing, and what must make more deep and suitable impressions upon our hearts than ever the most affecting view of them by Faith, at this distance, could do.

10. *In such ravishing sights, and joyful ascriptions of glory to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for evermore, all the separated spirits of the just are employed and wholly taken up in heaven, as they come in their several times thither; and will be so employed in that temple-service unto the end of the*

world, when Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to his Father, and thenceforth God shall be all in all.

The illustration and confirmation of this assertion we have in these two or three particulars.

(1.) That all the spirits of just men, from the beginning of the world, until Christ's ascension into heaven, did enter into heaven, as a place of rest, as a city prepared for them of God, Heb. xi. 16. and did enjoy blessedness and glory there: But yet there seems to be an alteration even in heaven itself, since the ascension of Christ into it, and such an alteration as advanceth the glory thereof both to angels and saints. 'Heaven itself (saith one * who is now there) was not what it is, before the entrance of Christ into the sanctuary for the administration of his office. Neither the saints departed, nor the angels themselves, were participant of that glory which now they are. Neither yet doth this argue any defect in heaven, or the state thereof in its primitive constitution: For, the perfection of any state hath respect unto that order of things which it is originally suited unto. Take all things in the order of the first creation, and with respect thereunto, heaven was perfect in glory from the beginning, *&c.*

'Whatever was their rest, refreshment, and blessedness; whatever were their enjoyments of the presence of God, yet was there no throne of grace erected in heaven, no high-priest appearing before it, no lamb as it had been slain, no joint ascription of glory unto him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb for ever;" † *God having ordained some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect,* Heb. xi. 40.

Now both the angels and saints in heaven, do behold Christ in his priestly office within that sanctuary; a sight never seen in heaven before.

(2.) This frame of heavenly worship will continue as it is unto the end of the world, and then another alteration will be made in the manner of his dispensatory kingdom; "For then "he must deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; "and then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that "put all things under him, that God may be all in all," as the apostle speaks, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28. So that as the present state of heaven is not, in all respects, what it was before Christ's

* Dr. Owen's Christologia, p. 158.—355.

† *Priusquam ad nostra tempora perventum est.* Camero.

aſcenſion thither; ſo after the conſummation of the mediatorial kingdom, and the gathering all the elect into glory, it will not in all reſpects be what now it is.

Chriſt will never ceaſe to be the immediate head of the whole glorified creation. God having gathered all the elect, both angels and men, unto a head in him, and he being the knot or centre of that collective body, the whole frame of the glorified church would be diſſolved, ſhould he loſe his relation of a head to it. Yea, I doubt not but he will for ever continue to be the medium of communion betwixt God and his glorified church: God will ſtill communicate himſelf to us through Chriſt, and our adherence, love and delight, will ſtill be thro' Chriſt: In a word, whatever change ſhall be made, the perſon of Chriſt, and therein his human nature, ſhall ſtill continue to be the eternal object of divine glory, praiſe, and worſhip, Rev. xxii. 4.

But when he ſhall have gathered home all his elect to glory, he will reſign his diſpenſatory † kingdom, and become ſubject *(as man, and as head of that body which he purchaſed)* to his Father himſelf, "that God may be all in all," as it is 1 Cor. xv. 28.

(1.) *All in all*, that is, all the ſaints ſhall be filled, and abundantly ſatisfied, in and from God alone; there ſhall be no emptineſs, no want, no complaint: For, as there is water enough in one ſea to fill all rivers, light enough in one ſun to illuminate all the world; ſo all ſouls ſhall be eternally filled, ſatisfied, and bleſſed in one God. Surely, there is enough in God for millions of ſouls: For, if there be enough in God for all the angels, Mat. xviii. 10. yea, enough in God for Jeſus Chriſt, Col. i. 19. there muſt be enough for all our ſouls. The capacity of angels is larger than ours; the capacity of Chriſt is larger than that of angels: He that fills them, can, and will therefore fill us, or be all in all to us.

(2.) *All in all*, that is, complete ſatisfaction to all the ſaints, in the abſence of all other things, out of which they were wont to ſuck ſome comfort and delight in this world. He will now be inſtead of all; eminently all without them. We ſhall ſuck no more ſweetneſs out of food, ſleep, relations, ordinances, *&c.* there will be no more need or uſe of them, than there is of candles in the ſun-ſhine, Rev. xxii. 5.

(3.) *All in all*, that is, God only ſhall be loved, praiſed, and

† For if this diſpenſatory kingdom (of Chriſt) had never been delivered up, then he (*viz.* God) would never receive the full uſe of his natural kingdom. *Junius.*

admired by all the saints; they shall love no creature out of God, but all in God, or rather God in them all. This is that blessed state to which all things tend, for which the angels and glorified souls in heaven long. Hence it is that there is joy in heaven upon the conversion of any poor sinner on earth; because thereby the body of Christ mystically advanceth towards its fulness and completeness, Luke xv. 10. No sooner is a poor soul struck by the word to the heart, and sent home crying, O sick! sick! sick of sin, and sick for Christ! but the news of it is quickly in heaven, and is matter of great joy there, because they wait as well as Christ, for the time of consummation. To conclude, those that went first to heaven before Christ's ascension, were fully at rest in God, and blessed in his enjoyment, and yet upon Christ's ascension thither, their happiness was advanced: 'Tis a new heaven as it were to feed their eyes upon the *man Christ Jesus* there. Those that now stand before the throne, ravished with the face of Christ, and ascribing glory to him for ever, are also in a most blessed state, and are filled with the joy of the Lord. And yet, two things still remain to be farther done, before they are, as they shall be for ever, *viz.* the restitution of their bodies, which yet lie in the dust, and the delivering up of the dispensatory kingdom, upon the coming in of the fulness of all their fellow-saints; and after that no more alteration for ever, but they shall be both in soul and body for ever with the Lord. What tongue of man or angel can give us the complete emphasis of that word, *ever with the Lord?* or that, of God's being *all in all?* O what hath God prepared for them that love him!

Proposition 12. *It pleaseth God at some times, even in this life, to give some men the foresight and foretaste of that blessedness, which holy separated souls do now enjoy, and themselves shall shortly enjoy with God in glory.*

Specimens and earnests of heaven are no unknown things upon earth. As the grapes of Eshcol, so the joy of heaven may be tasted before we come thither, and these foresights and prelibations of heaven are either,

1. Extraordinary, or
2. Ordinary.

1. Extraordinary, for the way and manner; when the soul is either, (1.) Caught from the body for a short time, in an extasy, when in a visional way heavenly things are presented to it: or, (2.) When the bodily eye is elevated, and strengthened above its natural vigour and ability, to behold the astonishing objects of the other world.

(1.) Of the first sort and rank was that famous rapture of Paul, mentioned 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3. "I knew a man in Christ "fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell, or "whether out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth) such "an one caught up to the third heaven," *&c.* * 'Tis questionable indeed, whether the soul of the apostle was really separated from his body, whilst he suffered that extasy, or whether his senses were only laid, as it were, asleep for that time; he himself could not determine the question, much less can any other: But whether so or no, this seems evident, that his senses were for that time utterly useless to him. If his body was not dead, it was all one as if it had been so, for any use his soul then made of it.

"† In extasies, all the senses and powers are idle, except the "understanding:" His soul, for that time, seemed to be disjoined from his body, much as a flame of fire, which you shall sometimes see to play and hover at a distance from the wood, and then catching the fewel again. Probably, this was that trance he fell into, in the temple, when he was praying, mentioned in Acts xxi. 17.

In this rapture his soul ascended above this world, it was caught up into paradise, into the third heaven, the place in which Christ's soul was after his death: and there he heard those ἄρρητα ῥήματα, unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter: For, alas! poor mortals cannot pronounce the *Shibboleth* of heaven: The heavenly inhabitants talk in no other dialect; but the language of heaven is not properly spoken by any but the inhabitants of heaven. Now Paul was not admitted into their society at that time, as he was at his death, but was only a spectator, a stander-by, as the angels are in the assemblies of the saints here on earth. But, O what a day was that day to his soul! It was as one of the days of heaven; no words could signify to another man what he felt, what he tasted in that hour. Such favours will not be indulged to many: he was a chosen vessel, and appointed to extraordinary sufferings

* It does not appear with certainty, whether the soul of Paul was then separated from the body; seeing he himself owns his ignorance as to that matter: Hence we cannot determine what befel him as to abstraction from the senses, namely, whether the senses were extinct, his body being dead, through the separation of the soul: Or only sopited, the body not being dead. *Colleg. Conimbr. lib.* 3. *Art.* 3. *p.* 512.

† *In extasi feriari omnes potentias præter intellectum.* Abulen.

for Christ, and it was necessary his supports, and encouragements should be answerable.

It was no less an extraordinary and wonderful vision, which Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and John had ‡; such representations of God as overwhelmed them, and made nature faint under them; and no wonder, for if the eyes of creatures are so weak, that they cannot directly behold such a glorious creature as the sun, how much less can they bear the glorious excellency and majesty of God?

(2.) And sometimes, without an extasy, representations of Christ, and the glory of heaven, have been made, and the very bodily eye fortified, and elevated above its natural vigour, and ability to behold him. Thus it was with Stephen, at his martyrdom. Acts vii. 55, 56. "Who being full of the Holy Ghost, "looked stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God and "Jesus standing on the right-hand of God." This was not a sight of faith, but an extraordinary sight by the bodily eye, is evident, from its effect upon his outward man; it made his face to shine, as the face of an angel.

2. There are also, beside this, ordinary, and more common foretastes of heaven, and the glory to come, with which many believers are favoured in this world; and such are those which come into the heart, upon the steady, and more fixed views of the world to come, by faith, and the more raised, spiritual actings of grace in duty. "Believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable, "and full of glory," 1 Pet. i. 8. χαρᾳ ἀνεκλαλητῳ, with a glorified joy, or a joy of the same kind, and nature, with the joy of glorified spirits, though in an inferior, and allayed degree.

And yet, with the allowance of its allay, and rebatement, it is like new wine put into old, and crazy bottles, which is ready to make them fly, and would do so, should they be of any long continuance. "Stay me (saith the spouse) with flaggons, com-"fort me with apples, I am sick of love," Cant. ii. 5. The sickness was not the sickness of desire, or of grief, of that she had complained before; but the sickness of love, *(i. e.)* she was ready to faint under the unsupportable weight of Christ's manifested and sealed love, not able to bear what she felt, pained with the love of Christ; and the desired cure speaks this to be her case, "Stay me with flaggons, comfort me with apples." As if she had said, Lord, support, and under-prop my soul, for it reels, staggers, and fails under the pressure, and weight of thy love. Much like the case of a holy man, who cried out,

‡ Isa. vi. 1, 2. Ezek. i. 1. Dan. x. 8, 9. Rev. i. 17.

under the overwhelming ſenſe of the love of Chriſt, ſhed abroad into his heart in prayer, Hold, Lord, hold, thy poor creature is a clay veſſel, and can hold no more. Though theſe joys bring not the ſoul into a perfect *extaſy*, they certainly bring it as near as may be, to it Mr. ‖ Fox tells us of one Giles, of Bruxels, a godly martyr, who in priſon ſpent moſt of his time apart from the reſt, in ſecret prayer; in which his ſoul was ſo ardent, and intent, that he often forgot himſelf, and the time; and when he was called to meat, he neither ſaw, nor heard thoſe that ſtood by him, till he was lifted up by the arms; and then he would gladly ſpeak to them, as one newly awaked out of a ſweet ſleep. Theſe foretaſtes of heaven may, from the manner of their conveyance, be diſtinguiſhed into,

1. Mediate. And,
2. Immediate.

1. *Mediate*, in, and by the previous uſe, and exerciſe of faith, heart-examination, *&c.* The Spirit of God concurring with, and bleſſing of ſuch duties, as theſe, helps the ſoul by them to a ſight of its intereſt in Chriſt, and the glory to come; which being gained, joy is no more under the ſoul's command. I have, with good aſſurance, this account of a miniſter, 'Who 'being alone in a journey, and willing to make the beſt im-'provement he could of that day's ſolitude, ſet himſelf to a cloſe 'examination of the ſtate of his ſoul, and then of the life to 'come, and the manner of its being, and living in heaven, in 'the views of all thoſe things which are now pure objects of 'faith, and hope. After a while, he perceived his thoughts be-'gin to fix, and come cloſer to theſe great, and aſtoniſhing 'things, than was uſual; and as his mind ſettled upon them, 'his affections began to riſe with anſwerable livelineſs, and 'vigour.

'He therefore (whilſt he was yet maſter of his own thoughts) 'lifted up his heart to God in a ſhort ejaculation that God 'would ſo order it in his providence, that he might meet with 'no interruption from company, or any other accident, in that 'journey: which was granted him: For, in all that day's 'journey, he neither met, overtook, or was overtaken by any. 'Thus going on his way, his thoughts began to ſwell, and riſe 'higher and higher, like the waters in Ezekiel's viſion, till at 'laſt they became an overflowing flood. Such was the inten-'tion of his mind, ſuch the raviſhing taſtes of heavenly joys, 'and ſuch the full aſſurance of his intereſt therein; that he ut-

‖ Acts and Mon. p. 811.

'erly loſt a ſight, and ſenſe of this world, and all the concerns 'thereof; and, for ſome hours, knew no more where he was, 'than if he had been in a deep ſleep upon his bed. At laſt he 'began to perceive himſelf very faint, and almoſt choaked with 'blood, which running in abundance from his noſe, had diſco-'loured his clothes, and his horſe, from the ſhoulder to the 'hoof. He found himſelf almoſt ſpent, and nature to faint 'under the preſſure of joy unſpeakable, and unſupportable; 'and at laſt, perceiving a ſpring of water in his way, he, with 'ſome difficulty, alighted, to cleanſe, and cool his face and 'hands, which were drenched in blood, tears and ſweet.

'By that ſpring he ſat down, and waſhed, earneſtly deſiring, 'if it were the pleaſure of God, that it might be his parting-'place from this world: He ſaid, death had the moſt amiable 'face in his eye, that ever he beheld, except the face of Jeſus 'Chriſt, which made it ſo; and that he could not remember '(though he believed he ſhould die there) that he had one 'thought of his dear wife, or children, or any other earthly 'concernment.

'But having drank of that ſpring, his ſpirits revived, the blood 'ſtanched, and he mounted his horſe again; and on he went, 'in the ſame frame of ſpirit, till he had finiſhed a journey of 'near thirty miles, and came, at night, to his inn, where, being 'come, he greatly admired how he came thither, that his 'horſe, without his direction, had brought him thither, and 'that he fell not all that day, which paſſed not without ſeveral 'trances, of conſiderable continuance.

'Being alighted, the inn-keeper came to him, with ſome aſto-'niſhment, (being acquainted with him formerly) O Sir, ſaid 'he, what is the matter with you? You look like a dead man. 'Friend, replied he, I was never better in my life. Shew me 'my chamber, cauſe my cloak to be cleanſed, burn me a little 'wine, and that is all I deſire of you for the preſent. Accord-'ingly it was done, and a ſupper ſent up, which he could not 'touch; but requeſted of the people, that they would not 'trouble, or diſturb him, for that night. All this night paſſed 'without one wink of ſleep, though he never had a ſweeter 'night's reſt in all his life. Still, ſtill, the joy of the Lord 'overflowed him, and he ſeemed to be an inhabitant of the 'other world. The next morning being come, he was early 'on horſeback again, fearing the divertiſement in the inn might 'bereave him of his joy; for he ſaid it was now with him, as 'with a man that carries a rich treaſure about him, who ſuſpects

' every *passenger* to be a *thief:* But within a few hours he was ' sensible of the ebbing of the tide, and before night, though ' there was a heavenly serenity, and sweet peace upon his spirit, ' which continued long with him, yet the transports of joy were ' over, and the fine edge of his delight blunted. He many ' years after called that day one of the days of heaven, and ' professed he understood more of the life of heaven by it, than ' by all the books he ever read, or discourses he ever had en- ' tertained about it.' This was, indeed, an extraordinary foretaste of heaven for degree, but it came in the ordinary way and method of faith and meditation.

There are, also, immediate illapses of heavenly joy, in the hearts of believers, at some times; of which, we may say as the prophet doth of the dew and rain, that "it tarrieth not for "man, nor waiteth for the sons of men;" a surprising light and joy, like that, Cant. vi. 12. "Or ever I was aware, my "soul made me like the chariots of Aminadab."

There is a witness of the Spirit, distinct from that of water, and blood, 1 John v. 8. that is, a witness, or sealing, which comes not in an argumentative way, by reasoning from either justification, or sanctification, but seems to come immediately from the Spirit. I know both sorts of testimonies, how clear, and sweet soever they are for the present, are liable afterwards to be called into question; but certainly, during the abode of them upon the soul, they are no less than *a short salvation*, a real participation of the joy of the Lord. And that which makes them so ravishing, and transporting, is,

(1.) The infinite weight with which the concerns of eternity lie upon the hearts, and thoughts of the people of God; nothing lies so near to their spirits, in all the world, as the matters of salvation do, and have still done ever since God thoroughly awakened them in their first effectual conviction. 'Tis said of Luther, * "There was such a strong impression of God upon "his spirit, in his first conviction, that there was neither heat, "nor blood, nor sense, nor speech discernible in him." Tho' it rise to that height but in a few, yet it settles in a deep, serious, and most solemn sense, and solicitude in all. This heightens the joy.

(2.) The restlessness of the soul, whilst matters of Salvation hang in a dubious suspence, must needs proportionably overflow it with joy, when God shall clear it. It was the saying of one,

* *Nec calor, nec sanguis, nec sensus, nec vox supprimebat.* Ep. ad Melanct.

and is the sense of many more, I have borne (said she) seven children, and they have all cost me dear; yet could I be well content to bear them all over again, for one glimpse of the love of God to my soul. This heightens the joy above expression.

And now, having explained the substance of the doctrine, in these twelve *propositions*, it remains, that, as a *mantissa*, or cast upon the whole, I farther clear what belongs to this subject, in the solution of several *queries* about the soul, in its unbodied, and separated state; and though the nature of some of these *queries* may seem too curious, yet I shall labour to speak according to the rules of sobriety, and contain myself within the line of modesty, in what I shall speak about them. And the first is this;

Query 1. *Whether any notion, or conception, can be formed of a separate soul? And if so, how we may be assisted duly to form it, and conceive of it?*

Sol. 1. It must be acknowledged not only very difficult, but an impossible task, for a soul immersed in matter, and so unacquainted with its own nature and powers, as it is in its embodied state, to gain a perfect, clear, and adequate conception of what it shall be in the world to come. Expect not then a perfect image, much less any magnificent draught of this excellent creature; this would be the same thing, as to go about to paint the sun in its glory, motions, and influences with a pencil. I shall think I have done enough, if I can but give you any umbrage, or faint representation of this sublime and spiritual being, and the manner of its subsisting and acting out of the body. For, seeing it is by nature invisible, and in most of its actions (whilst it is in the state of composition) it makes the same use of the body and natural spirits, that a scribe doth of his pen and ink, without which he cannot decypher the characters which are formed in his fancy; it must needs be difficult to conceive how it subsists and acts in a separate state.

Sol. 2. But though we acknowledge it to be a great difficulty to trace it beyond the limits of this world, though we perceive nothing to depart from the body at the instant of its expiration, but a puff of breath which vanishes like smoak into the air; and though atheistical † wits daringly pronounce an immaterial substance to be a mere jargon, a contradiction *in terminis*; which, being joined together, destroy one another: yet all this doth not make the notion of a separate soul impos-

† Hobb's Leviathan, chap. xxxvi.

ſible, much leſs undermine its exiſtence in its unbodied and lonely ſtate; the ſcriptures having ſo abundantly obviated all theſe atheiſtical ſuggeſtions, by ſo many plain diſcoveries of the happineſs of ſome, and miſery of others after this life: yea, my text anſwers us, that death is ſo far from deſtroying or annihilating, that it perfects the ſpirits of the juſt.

Sol. 3. There can be no more difficulty in conceiving of a ſeparate ſoul, than there is in conceiving of an angel. For it is certain, that a ſeparated ſoul, and an angel, are the livelieſt and cleareſt repreſentations of each other, in the whole number of created beings ‡. Some make the difference betwixt them little more than of a ſword in the ſcabbard, from one that is naked. A ſoul is but a *genius* in the body, and a *genius* (or angel) is a ſoul out of the body. An angel (ſaith another) is a complete and perfect ſoul, a ſoul an imperfect and incomplete angel.

The ſeparate ſoul doth not become an angel by putting off the body; they are, and ſtill will be divers ſpecies: but in this they agree, that in their common nature they are both ſpirits, that is, immaterial ſubſtances, endued with underſtanding, will, and active power. And I know not why the one ſhould not be as intelligible as the other; or if there be any advantage, the ſoul certainly muſt have it, ſeeing our acquaintance with ſouls is much more intimate than with angels. Angels indeed have larger capacities, and have no natural inclination to be embodied as ſouls have; but their common nature, as they are ſpirits, is the ſame: and if we can conceive of one, we may alſo of the other.

Sol. 4. But the difficulty ſeems to lie in this, how the ſoul can ſubſiſt alone without a body; and how the habits of grace, which were infuſed into it in this life by ſanctification, do inhere in it, or can be reduced into act by it, when it hath no bodily organs to work by.

As to the firſt, there is no difficulty at all, if we once rightly apprehend what is meant, when we call it a ſpiritual ſubſtance; that is, a being by itſelf, independent upon any other creature as to its exiſtence, as was opened before: the ſoul depends not for its life upon the body, but the body upon the ſoul. It is the ſame ſword when it is drawn, as it was when ſheathed in its ſcabbard; the ſoul is as much itſelf, when ſeparated from the body, as it was when united with it; its being is independent on it, it can live and act in a body, and it can do ſo with-

‡ Dr. More's immortality of the ſoul, l. 2. c. 17. § 4. *et* 8. *Bell. de Aſcen. mentis.*

out it: for it is a diſtinct being from its body, a ſubſtantial being itſelf. And,

Sol. 5. As for the habits of grace which accompany it to heaven, it would much facilitate our apprehenſion of it, if we but compare acquired and infuſed habits with each other. It is true, they are of different natures and originals, but the ſoul is the ſubject of them both, and their inheſion, and improvement, is much after the ſame manner.

Take we then an acquired habit into conſideration, which is nothing elſe but a permanent quality rendering the ſubject of it prompt and ready to perform a work with eaſe: ſuppoſe that of muſic, or writing, and we ſhall find theſe habits to be ſafely lodged in the ſoul, as well when the body is laid into the deepeſt ſleep, which is the image of death, as when it is awake and moſt active; for they are both artiſts when aſleep, and need learn no new rules to play or write when you awake them; which ſhews the habits to be permanently rooted in their minds.

Infuſed habits of grace are as deeply rooted in the ſoul, yea, deeper than any acquired habit can be: for when knowledge and tongues ſhall be done away, love abideth, 1 Cor. xiii. 8. *viz.* after death, when the body is aſleep in the grave.

Sol. 6. Add hereto, that theſe habits of grace are inſeparably rooted or lodged in a ſubject, which is by nature a *ſpirit*, that is to ſay, an intelligent, active being, able to uſe its faculties of ‖ underſtanding, will, and affections, and conſequently, in their uſe, to reduce theſe habits of grace inherent in them, into act, without the help of the body: for to ſuppoſe otherwiſe, were to diſpirit it, and deſtroy the very nature of it.

Moreover, let the ſpirit, thus furniſhed with gracious habits, be now conſidered in ſeparation from the body, in which ſtate it enjoyeth, and rejoiceth in a double privilege it never had before, *viz.* perfection both of itſelf, and of its graces, and the neareſt acceſs to God it is capable of; 2 Cor. v. 6. "Abſent "from the body, and preſent with the Lord." It hath now no body to clog or cloud it, nor can it complain of diſtance from God as it did in this world. Oh! at what rate muſt we conceive the love and delight of a ſoul under theſe great advantages,

‖ The underſtanding and will are the primary faculties of the ſoul, and therefore are called *inorganical*, becauſe not fixed to any member of the body, as the ſenſitive appetite and loco-motive powers are to their proper organs. The ſoul therefore hath the free uſe and exerciſe of them in its ſeparate ſtate.

to cast out their very spirits, as I may say, in their glorious activities and exercises! Well then, here you find 'a spirit naturally endued with understanding, will, and affections: in these 'faculties and affections, the habits of grace permanently rooted, which therefore accompany it in its ascension to glory: 'an ability to use and exercise these faculties and graces, and 'that in a more excellent degree and manner, than it did or 'could in this world, the subject and habits inherent being now 'both made perfect: the clog of flesh knocked off, and all distance from God removed, by its coming home to him, even 'as near as the capacity of the soul can admit. Conceive such 'a spirit so qualified, now ranked in its proper order among 'innumerable other holy and blessed spirits, which surround 'the throne of God, beholding his face with infinite delectation, 'and acting all its powers and graces to the highest, in the 'worshipping, praising, loving, and admiring him that sitteth 'on the throne, and the lamb for evermore:' And then you have a true, though imperfect idea or notion of the spirit of a *just man made perfect.*

I will not here make use of the other glass to represent a damned soul, separate for a time from its body, and for ever from the Lord: that will be shewn you in its proper place.

Query 2. *Whether there be any difference in the separation of gracious souls from their bodies? And if so, in what particulars doth the difference appear?*

Sol. For the clear stating and satisfying this question, I will lay down some things negatively, and some things positively about it. On the negative part, I desire two things may be noted.

1. That there is no difference betwixt the separation of one gracious soul and another, in point of safety. Every regenerate soul is fully secured, in and by Jesus Christ, from the danger of perishing, and is out of hazard of the wrath to come.

This must needs be so, because all that are in Christ are equally justified by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, without difference, to them all; Rom. iii. 22. "Even the righteousness "of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon "all them that believe, for there is no difference:" by virtue whereof, they are all equally secured from wrath to come, one as well as another. As all that sailed with Paul, so all that die in Christ come safe to the shore of glory, and not one of them is lost. The sting of death smites none that are in Christ.

2. There is no difference betwixt the departing souls of just men, in respect of the supporting presence of God with them,

in that their hour of diſtreſs; that promiſe belongs to them all, Pſal. xci. 15. "I will be with him in trouble;" and ſo doth that, Heb. xiii. 5. "I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee." Their God is certainly with them all, to order the circumſtances of their death, and all the occurrences of that day, to his glory, and their good. *Supports* I have, (ſaid a good man in ſuch an hour) though *ſuavities* I want; and ſo they have alſo who meet with the hardeſt conflict at death.

But notwithſtanding their equality in theſe privileges, there is a great difference betwixt the departing ſouls of juſt men. And this difference is manifeſt both in the

1. External
2. Internal

circumſtances of their death.

1. In the external circumſtances of their death, all have not one and the ſame paſſage to heaven in all reſpects; for,

(1.) Some go thither by the ordinary road of a natural death from their beds, and the arms of lamenting friends, to the arms and boſom of Jeſus Chriſt: but others ſwim through the Red-ſea to Canaan: from a ſcaffold to the throne; from a gibbet or ſtake to their Father's houſe; from inſulting enemies to their triumphant brethren, the palm-bearing multitude. This is a rough, but honourable way to glory.

(2.) Some lie long under the hand of death, before it diſpatch them; it approaches them by ſlow and lingering paces, they feel every ſtep of death diſtinctly as it comes on towards them; but others are favoured with a quick diſpatch, a ſhort paſſage from hence to glory. Hezekiah feared a pining ſickneſs, Iſa. xxxviii. 10, 12. what he feared, many feel. O how many days, yea, weeks and months, have many gracious ſouls dwelt upon the brink of the pit, crying, How long, Lord, how long?

3. The pains and agonies of death are more acute and ſharp to ſome of God's people than to others: death is bitter in the moſt mild and gentle form of it. Two ſuch dear and intimate friends as the ſoul and body are, cannot part without ſome tears, groans, or ſighs; and thoſe more deep and emphatical than the groans and ſighs of the living uſe to be: but yet, comparatively ſpeaking, the death of one, may be ſtiled ſweet and eaſy to another's. Latimer and Ridley found it ſo, though burnt in the ſame flame.

In this reſpect all things come alike to all, and the ſame difference is found in the worſt, as well as in the beſt men: ſome like ſheep are laid in the grave, Pſal. xlix. 14. others die in the

bitterness of their soul, Job xxi. 25. and by this no man knows either love or hatred.

2. There are besides these, some remarkable internal differences in the dissolution of good men: the sum whereof is this,

1st, That some gracious souls have a very hard, strait, difficult entrance into heaven: just as it is with ships that sail by a very bare wind; all their art, care, and pains, will but just weather some head-land, or cape: they steer fast by some dangerous rock or sand, and with a thousand fears and dangers, win their port at last. Saved they are, but yet to use the apostle's phrase, scarcely saved, or saved as by fire. And this difficulty ariseth to them from one, or all these causes.

(1.) It ordinarily ariseth from the weakness of their faith, which is in many souls, without either the light of evidence, or strength of reliance; neither able to dissolve their doubts, nor steadily repose their hearts: and thus they die, much at the rate they lived, poor doubting, and cloudy, though gracious souls. They can neither speak much of the comfort of past experiences, nor of the present foretastes of heaven.

(2.) The violent assaults and batteries of temptations make the passage exceeding difficult to some. O the sharp conflicts, and dreadful combats many poor souls endure upon a death bed! O the charges of hypocrisy, fortified by neglects of duty, formality and by-ends in duty, falls into sin after conviction and humiliation, *&c.* all which the soul is apt to yield to, and admit the dreadful conclusion.

These are the last, and therefore oft-times the most violent conflicts. The malice of Satan will send them halting to heaven, if he cannot bar them out of it.

(3.) To conclude: The hiding of God's face, puts terror into the face of death, and makes a dying day, a dark, and gloomy day. All darkness dispose to fear, but none like inward darkness. They must like a ship in distress, venture into the harbour in the dark, though they see not their landmarks.

2dly, But others have the privilege of an εὐθανασια, easy death, a comfortable, and sweet passage into glory, through the broad gate of assurance, 2 Pet. i. 11. even an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom. What a difference doth God make not only betwixt those that have grace, and those that have none, but betwixt gracious souls themselves in this matter: the things which usually make an easy passage to heaven are,

1. A pardon cleared, Isa. xxxiii. 24. The sense of pardon swallows up the sense of pain.

2. A heart weaned from this world, Heb. xi. 9, 13, 16. A heart loosed from the world, is a foot out of the snare. Mortified limbs are cut off from the body with little pain.

3. Fervent love to Christ, and longings to be with him, Phil. i. 23. He that loves Christ fervently, must needs loath absence from Christ proportionably.

4. Purity, and peace of conscience, make a death-bed soft and easy. The strains and wounds of conscience, in the time of life, are so many thorns in our bed, or pillow, in the time of death, 1 John iii. 21. But integrity gives boldness.

5. The work of obedience faithfully finished, or a steddy course of holiness throughout our life, is that which usually yields much peace and joy in death, Acts xx. 24.

6. But above all, the presence of the Comforter with us in that cloudy and dark day, turns it into one of the days of heaven, 1 Peter iv. 14. And thus ye see, though all dying Christians be equally safe, and all supported, and carried through by the power of God; yet their farewels to the body are not alike cheerful. There are many external, and internal circumstantial differences in the death of good men, as well as a substantial and essential difference betwixt all their deaths, and the death of a wicked man.

Query 3. *Whether any souls have notices, and forewarnings given them by signs, or predictions, in an extraordinary way, of their approaching separation?*

The terms of this question need a little explanation. Let us therefore briefly consider what is meant by signs, what by predictions, and what by extraordinary signs and predictions. *Terms opened.*

"A sign * is that which represents something else to us than "that which is seen or heard." And a sign of death, is that which gives notice to our minds that our departure is at hand.

"A prediction † is a forewarning of a person more plainly "and expressly of any thing which is afterwards to fall out or "come to pass;" and a prediction of death is an express notice or message, informing us of our own, or of another's death, to the end the mind may be actually disposed to an expectation thereof.

* *Signum est quod aliud repræsentat quam quod cernitur.*

† *Prædicere est aliquem de re aliqua eventura prænonere.*

Of ſigns, ſome are ordinary and natural, ſome extraordinary and ſupernatural, or at leaſt preternatural.

There are natural ſymptoms and prognoſtics of death which are common to moſt dying perſons, and by which phyſicians inform themſelves, and others, of the ſtate of the ſick. Theſe are out of this queſtion, we have nothing to do with them here; but I am enquiring after extraordinary ſigns and predictions by words or things forewarning us immediately, or by others, of our approaching death. The queſtion is, Whether ſuch intimations of death be at any time truly given unto men? or, Whether we are to take them for fabulous reports, and ſuperſtitious fancies?

For the negative, the following grounds are laid.

Reaſons for the negative.

Reaſon 1. The ſufficient ordinary proviſion God hath made in this caſe, renders all ſuch extraordinary notices and intimations of our death needleſs: and be ſure the moſt wiſe God doth nothing in vain. We have three ſtanding, ordinary, and ſufficient means to premonish us of our departure hence, *viz.* the ſcriptures, reaſon, and daily examples of mortality before our eyes. The ſcriptures tell us, our life is but "a va-"pour, which appeareth for a little while, and then vaniſheth "away," James iv. 14. That our "days are but as an hand-"breadth," and that "every man in his beſt eſtate is vanity," Pſal. xxxix. 5.

Reaſon tells us, ſo feeble a tie as our breath is can never ſecure our lives long. "The living know that they muſt die," Eccl. ix. 5. The radical moiſture, which is daily conſuming by the flame of life, muſt needs be ſpent e're long.

And all the graves we ſee opened ſo frequently, are ſufficient warnings, that we ourſelves muſt ſhortly follow. Therefore, as there was no need of manna, when bread might be had in an ordinary way, ſo neither is there need of extraordinary ſigns, when God hath abundantly furniſhed us with ſtanding and ordinary means for this purpoſe.

Reaſon 2. And as the ſcriptures render ſuch ſigns needleſs, ſo they ſeem to be directly againſt them. Chriſt commands us to "watch, becauſe we know not in what hour the Lord cometh." Yea, even Iſaac himſelf, an extraordinary perſon, and endowed with a ſpirit of prophecy, whereby he foretold the condition of his ſons after him, yet it is ſaid, Gen. xxvii. 2. "That he knew "not the day of his death." And it is not reaſonable to think that common perſons ſhould know that, which extraordinary and prophetic perſons knew not.

Reason 3. All mankind belong either to God or the devil. To such as belong to God, such extraordinary warnings are needless, for they have a watchful principle within them, which continually prompts them to mind their change; and besides, death cannot endanger those that are in Christ, how suddenly or unexpectedly soever it should befal them.

And for wicked men, it cannot be thought God should favour and privilege them in this matter above his own children; and as for Satan, he knows not the time of their death himself: and if he did, it would thwart his design and interest to discover it to them, Luke xi. 21. So that upon the whole, it should seem such signs and predictions are of no use, and the relations and reports of them fabulous.

But though these reasons make the common and daily use of such signs and predictions needless, yet they destroy not the credibility of them in all cases, and at all times. For, *E contra.*

1. There are recorded instances in scripture, of premonitions and predictions of the death of persons. Thus the death of Abijah was foretold to his mother by the prophet, and the precise hour thereof, which fell out answerably, 1 Kings xiv. 6, 12. And, thus, the death of the king of Assyria was foretold exactly, both as to kind and place, Isa. xxxvii. 7, —— 37, 38.

2. These predictions serve to other ends and uses sometimes, than the preparation of the persons warned, even to display the fore-knowledge, power, and justice of God, in marking out his enemies for ruin. And, thus, "the Lord is known by the "judgments that he executeth," Psal. ix. 16.

Thus Mr. Knox predicted the very place and manner of the death of the laird of Grange *. You have sometimes seen the courage and constancy of the laird of Grange in the cause of God, and now that unhappy man is casting himself away. I pray you, go to him from me, (said Mr. Knox), and tell him, that unless he forsakes that wicked course he is in, the rock wherein he confideth shall not defend him, nor the carnal wisdom of that man, (meaning the young Leshington) whom he counteth half a God, shall help him: but he shall be shamefully pulled out of that nest, and his carcase hung before the sun. And even so it fell out in the following year, when the castle was taken, and his body hanged out before the sun. Thus God exactly fulfilled the prediction of his death.

* Clark's Lives, p. 277.

The ſame Mr. Knox, in the year 1566, being in the pulpit at Edinburgh, upon the Lord's day, a paper was given up to him, among many others, wherein theſe words were ſcoffingly written concerning the earl of Murray, who was ſlain the day before, "Take up the man whom ye accounted another God." At the end of the ſermon, Mr. Knox bewailed the loſs that the church and ſtate had by the death of that virtuous man; and then added, "There is one in this company that makes this "horrible murder the ſubject of his mirth, for which all good "men ſhould be ſorry; but I tell him, he ſhall die where there "ſhall be none to lament him." The man that wrote this paper was one Thomas Metellan, a young gentleman, who ſhortly after, in his travels, died in Italy, having none to aſſiſt or lament him.

3. And others have had premonitions and ſigns of their own deaths, which accordingly fell out. And theſe premonitions have been given them, ſometimes by ſtrong irreſiſtible impreſſions upon their minds, ſometimes in dreams, and ſometimes by unuſual elevations of their ſpirits in duties of communion with God.

(1.) Some have had ſtrong and irreſiſtible impreſſions of their approaching change, made upon their minds. So had Sir Anthony Wingfield, who was ſlain at Breſt, *anno* 1594 †. At his undertaking of that expedition, he was ſtrongly perſuaded it would be his death; and therefore ſo ſettled and diſpoſed of his eſtate, as one that never reckoned to return again. And the day before he died, he took order for the payment of his debts, as one that ſtrongly preſaged the time was now at hand; which accordingly fell out the next day.

Much of the ſame nature was that of the late earl of Marlborough, who fell in the Holland war. He not only preſaged his own fall in that encounter, (which was exactly anſwered in the event) but left behind him that memorable and excellent letter, which evidenced to all the world, what deep and fixed apprehenſions of eternity it had left upon his ſpirits. Many examples of this nature might be produced, of ſuch as have, in their perfect health, foretold their own death; and others, who have dropt ſuch paſſages as were afterwards better underſtood by their ſorrowful friends, than when they firſt dropt from their lips.

(2) Others have been premoniſhed of their death by dreams, ſometimes their own, and ſometimes others. The learned and

† Sir John Norris's expedition, p. 46

judicious Amyraldus ‡ gives us this well atteſted relation of Lewis of Bourbon, That a little before his journey from Dreux, he dreamed that he had fought three ſucceſsful battles, wherein his three great enemies were ſlain, but that at laſt he himſelf was mortally wounded: and that after they were laid upon one another, he alſo was laid upon the dead bodies. The event was remarkable; for the Mareſchal of St. Andree was killed at Dreux, the duke of Guiſe at Orleans, the conſtable of Montmorency at St. Denis: and this was the triumvirate, which had ſworn the ruin of thoſe of the reformed religion, and the deſtruction of that prince. At laſt, he himſelf was ſlain at Balſac, as if there had been a continuation of deaths and funerals.

Suetonius in the life of Julius Caeſar, tells us, that the night before he was ſlain, he had divers premonitions thereof, for that night all the doors and windows of his chamber flew open; his wife alſo dreamed that Caeſar was ſlain, and that ſhe had him in her arms. The next day he was ſlain in Pompey's court, having received 23 wounds in his body.

Pamelius ‖ in the life of Cyprian, tells us, for a moſt certain and well atteſted truth, that upon his firſt entrance into Garubis (the place of his baniſhment) it was revealed to him in a dream, or viſion, that upon that very day twelve-month he ſhould be conſummate: which accordingly fell out; for a little before the time prefixed, there came ſuddenly two apparitors to bring him before the new proconſul Galeius, by whom he was condemned, as having been a ſtandard-bearer of his ſect, and an enemy of the gods. Whereupon he was condemned to be beheaded, a multitude of Chriſtians following him, crying, Let us die together with him.

And as remarkable is that recorded by the learned and ingenious Dr. Sterne *, of Mr. Uſher of Ireland, a man, ſaith he, of great integrity, dear to others by his merits, and my kinſman in blood: who upon the 8th day of July 1657, went from this to a better world. About four of the clock the day before he died, a matron, who died a little before, and whilſt living was dear to Mr. Uſher, appeared to him in his ſleep, and invited him to ſup with her the next night: he at firſt denied her, but ſhe more vehemently preſſing her requeſt on him, at laſt he conſented, and that very night he died.

I have alſo the fulleſt aſſurance that can be, of the truth of

‡ Amyraldus, of divine dreams, p. 122, 123.

‖ *Pamelius in vita Cypriani.*

* Dr. Sterne's *diſſertatio de morte*, p. 163.

this following narrative. A perſon yet living was greatly concerned about the welfare of his dear father and mother, who were both ſhut up in London, in the time of the great contagion in 1665. Many letters he ſent to them, and many hearty prayers to heaven for them. But about a fortnight before they were infected, he fell about break of day into this dream, That he was in a great inn which was full of company, and being very deſirous to find a private room, where he might ſeek God for his parents life, he went from room to room, but found company in them all; at laſt, caſting his eye into a little chamber, which was empty, he went into it, locked the door, kneeled down by the outſide of the bed, fixing his eyes upon the plaiſtered wall, within ſide the bed; and whilſt he was vehemently begging of God the life of his friends, there appeared upon the plaiſter of the wall before him, the ſun and moon ſhining in their full ſtrength. The ſight at firſt amazed and diſcompoſed him ſo far, that he could not continue his prayer, but kept his eye fixed upon the body of the ſun; at laſt a ſmall line or ring of black, no bigger than that of a text-pen, circled the ſun, which increaſing ſenſibly, eclipſed in a little time the whole body of it, and turned it into a blackiſh colour; which done, the figure of the ſun was immediately changed into a perfect death's head, and after a little while vaniſhed quite away. The moon ſtill continued ſhining as before; but while he intently beheld it, it alſo darkened in like manner, and turned alſo into another death's head, and vaniſhed. This made ſo great an impreſſion upon the beholder's mind, that he immediately awaked in confuſion and perplexity of thoughts about his dream; and awaking his wife, related the particulars to her with much emotion and concernment; but how to apply it, he could not preſently tell, only he was ſatisfied that the dream was of an extraordinary nature: at laſt Joſeph's dream came to his thoughts with the like emblems, and their interpretation; which fully ſatisfied him that God had warned and prepared him thereby for a ſudden parting with his dear relations; which anſwerably fell out in the ſame order, his father dying that day fortnight following, and his mother juſt a month afterwards.

I know there is much vanity in dreams; and yet I am fully ſatisfied, ſome are weighty, ſignificant and declarative of the purpoſes of God.

(3.) *Laſtly*, An unuſual and extraordinary elevation of the ſoul to God, and enlargement in communion with him, hath been a ſignifying forerunner of the death of ſome good men: for as the body hath its *levamen ante ferale*, lightning before

death, and more vegete and brisk a little before its diſſolution, ſo it is ſometimes with the ſoul alſo. I have known ſome perſons to arrive on a ſudden to ſuch heights of love to God, and vehement longings to be diſſolved, that they might be with Chriſt, that I could not but look upon it, as Chriſt did upon the box of ointment, as done againſt their death: and ſo indeed it hath proved in the event.

Thus it was with that renowned ſaint, Mr. Brewen of Stapleford; as he excelled others in the holineſs of his life, ſo he much excelled himſelf towards his death, his motions towards heaven being then moſt vigorous and quick. The day before his laſt ſickneſs, he had ſuch extraordinary enlargements of heart in his cloſet-duty, that he ſeemed to forget all the concernments of his body, and this lower world; and when his wife told him, Sir, I fear you have done yourſelf hurt with riſing ſo early; he anſwered, "If you had ſeen ſuch glorious things as I "ſaw this morning in private prayer with God, you would "not have ſaid ſo; for they were ſo wonderful and unſpeakable, "that whether I was in the body, or out of the body, with "Paul, I cannot tell."

And ſo it was with learned and holy Mr. Rivet, who ſeemed as a man in heaven, juſt before he went thither; and ſo it hath been with thouſands beſide theſe. I confeſs it is not the lot of every gracious ſoul (as was ſhewed you in the laſt queſtion) nor doth it make any difference as to the ſafety of the ſoul, whatever it makes as to comfort. Let all therefore labour to make ſure their union with Chriſt, and live in the daily exerciſes of grace, in the duties of religion; and then, though God ſhould give them no ſuch extraordinary warning one way or other, they ſhall never be ſurpriſed by death to their loſs, let it come never ſo unexpectedly upon them.

Queſt. It may be alſo queried, whether Satan, by his inſtruments, may not foretel the death of ſome men? How elſe did the witch of Endor fortel the death of Saul? and the Soothſayers the death of Caeſar upon the *Ides*, *(i. e.)* the fifteenth day of March, which was the fatal day to him?

Sol. Foreknowledge of things to come, which appear not in their next cauſes, is certainly the Lord's prerogative, Iſa. xli. 23. Whatever, therefore, Satan doth in this matter, muſt be done either by conjecture or commiſſion. As to the caſe of Saul, 'tis not to be queſtioned but that he knowing the kingdom was made to David by promiſe, and that the Lord was departed from Saul, and ſeeing how near the armies were to a battle, might ſtrongly conjecture and conclude, and accordingly tell

him, "To-morrow thou ſhalt be with me," 1 Sam. xxviii. 19.

And ſo for the death of Caeſar, the devil knew the conſpiracy was ſtrong againſt him, and the plot laid for that day; and ſo it was both eaſy for him to reveal it to the Soothſayers, and his intereſt to do it, thereby to bring that curſed art into reputation.

As for other ſigns and forewarnings of death, by the unuſual reſort of doleful creatures, as *owls* and *ravens*, vulgarly accounted ominous: *Wall-watches*, upon this account called *death-watches*; and the eating of wearing apparel by rats: I look upon them generally as ſuperſtitious fancies, not worthy to be regarded among Chriſtians. God may, but I know not what ground we have to believe, that he doth commiſſion ſuch creatures to bring us the meſſage of death from him. To conclude, therefore,

Let no man expect, or depend upon any ſuch extraordinary premonitions and warnings of his change, and neglect his daily work and duty of preparation for it. We have warnings in the word, in the examples of mortality, frequently before us, in all the diſeaſes and decays we often feel in our own bodies; and by the ſigns of the times, which threaten death and deſolation. Be ye, therefore, always ready, for ye know not in what watch of the night your Lord cometh.

Query 4. *Whether ſeparated ſouls have any knowledge of, or commerce or intercourſe with men in this life; and if not, what is to be thought of the apparitions of the dead?*

1. *By ſeparated ſouls*, underſtand the departed ſouls, both of godly, and ungodly, indifferently, and not as it is reſtrained to one ſort only in the text; for of both it is pretended there are frequent apparitions after death.

2. By the knowledge ſuch ſouls are ſuppoſed to have after death, both of perſons and things in this lower world, we underſtand not a general knowledge, which one ſort of them have of the ſtate and condition of the church militant on earth; for this, we think, cannot be denied to the ſpirits of the juſt made perfect, ſeeing they are ſtill fellow-members with us of the ſame myſtical body of Chriſt, and do behold our High-prieſt appearing before God, and offering up our prayers for us, and long for the conſummation of the body of Chriſt, as well as cry for vengeance againſt the perſecutors thereof, Rev. vi. 10. Nor do I think thoſe words, Iſa. lxiii. 16. repugnant hereunto: "Abraham is ignorant of us, and Iſrael acknowledgeth us not:" for I look upon the import of thoſe words only as an humble acknowledgment of their defection, which rendered them un-

worthy that their forefathers should own, or acknowledge them any more for their children; and not as implying their utter ignorance, or total oblivion of the church's state on earth.

But I here understand such a particular knowledge of our personal states and conditions, as they once had when they dwelt among us in the body; and this seems to be denied them by those scriptures alledged against it in the margin *.

3. By commerce and intercourse; understand not their intercession with God for us, which the Papists affirm; but their concernments about our natural, or civil interests in this world, so as to be useful to our persons, by warning us of death, or dangers; or to our estates, by disquieting such as wrong us, in not fulfilling the wills and testaments they once made; or by giving us notice, by words or signs, of the death of our friends, who died at a distance from us, or come to some violent and untimely end.

The sense of the words being thus determined, and the question so stated, I will, for the resolution of it, give you,

I. The strength of what I find offered for the affirmative.

II. The general concessions, or what may be granted.

III. My own judgment about it, with the grounds thereof.

I. Some there are, even among the learned and judicious, who are for the affirmative part of the question, and do with much confidence assert, that departed souls both know our particular concerns in this world, and intermeddle with them: confirming their assertion both by reasons to convince us that it may be so, and variety of instances that it is so. I will produce both the one and the other, and give them a due consideration and censure.

The substance of what is pleaded for the affirmative, I find thus collected and improved by † Dr. Sterne, a learned physician in Ireland, in his book entitled, *A Dissertation concerning Death:* where he offers us these four arguments, to convince that it is possible for departed souls thus to appear, and perform such offices for their friends on earth.

" *Arg.* 1. ‡ Angels by command from God, are useful and

* Job xiv. 21. Eccles. ix. 5, 6. John xix. 25.

† *Dissertatio de morte, a p.* 208. *ad p.* 214.

‡ (1.) *Angeli jussu Dei hominibus opitulantur, haudquaquam ambigitur; unde animas a corpore solutas sese rebus humanis miscere comprobari videtur. Sequelæ fundamentum duplex est, prius, quod animæ separatæ angeli sunt, saltem angelis æquales; poste-*

" helpful to men; they are the ſaints guardians, and it is pro-
" bable that each Chriſtian hath his peculiar angel: whence
" it will follow, that ſeparated ſouls do mingle themſelves with
" human affairs, and that becauſe they are angels, at leaſt equal
" unto angels, Luke xx. 36. Beſides, they being ſpirits that
" were once embodied, muſt needs be more fit for this employ-
" ment, than thoſe who never had any tie at all to a body;"
unleſs we can imagine them to have loſt the remembrance of all that ever they did, and ſuffered in the body; as alſo that they put off, and buried all their affections to us with their bodies, which is hard to think. Even as Chriſt our High-prieſt is qualified for that office, above all others in heaven, becauſe he once dwelt, and ſuffered in a body, like ours, here upon earth; ſo ſeparated ſouls are qualified above all other ſpirits, who are unrelated to bodies of fleſh.

" *Arg.* 2. * The church triumphant and militant are but
" one body; and how much better the triumphant are than
" the militant, by ſo much the more propenſe they are to ſuc-
" cour and help the other that ſtand in need of it." This being the caſe, we cannot imagine but they are inclined to perform all good offices for us; for elſe they ſhould do leſs for us now, they are in a ſtate of the higheſt perfection in heaven, than they did, or were willing to do, in their imperfect ſtate on earth.

" *Arg.* 3. † A will, or teſtament (as Ulpian defines it) is
" the juſt ſentence, or declaration of our minds, concerning
" that which we would have done after our deceaſe. Theſe
" teſtaments have always, and among all nations, been religi-
" ouſly obſerved, as the apoſtle witneſſeth, Gal. iii. 15. The

rius, quod magis idonei ſunt quibus officium generi humano ſuccurrendi demandetur, quam ſpiritus inter quos et corpus nullus unquam interceſſit nexus, &c.

* (2.) *Eccleſia eſt corpus unum, cujus membra quo meliora, eo magis ad aliis ejuſdem corporis membris opitulandum ſunt propenſa; hujus autem corporis pars altera eſt triumphans in cœlis, altera militans in terris: Illa melior, hæc opis magis indigna,* &c.

† (3.) *Teſtamentum (Ulpiano definiente) eſt voluntatis noſtræ juſta ſententia de eo quod poſt mortem noſtram fieri volumus. Teſtamentum autem tanquam res ſacra ab omnibus gentibus religioſe obſervatur,* Gal. iii. 15. *Ratio autem tam religioſæ tamque univerſalis obſervantiæ eſt, quoniam animas eorum qui Teſtamenta condiderant, etiam ſuam poſt mortem, in eadem voluntate perſeverare, ejus complementa curare, ac deinque ejus vel executrices, vel non præſtitæ vindices eſſe præſumitur.*

" reaſons of this ſo religious obſervance are a preſumption, that " thoſe who made them when alive, continue in the ſame mind " and will after death; that they take care for the fulfilling of " them, and revenge the non-performance upon the unjuſt ex- " ecutors." For otherwiſe there can be no reaſon why ſo great a ſtreſs ſhould be laid upon the will of the dead, if they care not whether their wills be performed, or no. Why ſhould we be ſollicitous and ſtudious about it, and pay ſo great a reverence to it, but upon this account?

" *Arg.* 4. ‡ The ſcriptures forbid conſultations with the " dead, Deut. xviii. 10, 11. This prohibition ſuppoſeth ſome " did conſult them, and received anſwers from them; which " muſt needs imply ſome commerce betwixt the living, and the " ſouls that are departed:" And, conſidering he had before forbidden their conſulation with the devil, it appears that here we muſt needs underſtand the very ſouls of the dead, and not the devil perſonating them only.

Theſe are the arguments of this learned author for the affirmative, which he cloſes with two neceſſary cautions: *Firſt*, That this lays no foundation for religious worſhip, or invocation of departed ſouls; thoſe that are helpful to us, are not therefore to be worſhipped. *Secondly*, That we muſt acknowledge ourſelves to be under much darkneſs, as to the way and manner of the converſe of ſpirits with us.

The moſt acute and learned ‖ Dr. More, I find of the ſame opinion. He affirms, that departed ſouls are capable of a vital union with an airy vehicle (or body) in which they can eaſily move from place to place, and appear to the living; and act in their own affairs: as in detecting murders, rebuking injurious executors, viſiting and counſelling their wives and children, forewarning them of ſuch and ſuch courſes, *&c.* To which we may add, the profeſſion of the Spirit, thus appearing, of being the ſoul of ſuch a one; as alſo, the ſimilitude of the perſon: And all this a-do is in things very juſt, and ſerious, unfit for a devil, with that care, and kindneſs, to promote; and as unfit for a good genius: it being below ſo noble a creature to tell a

‡ (4.) *In ſacris ſcripturis conſulere mortuos paſſim prohibetur, ut* Deut. xviii. 10, 11. *Sed ſi homines a mortuis non ſuſcitentur, legibus haud opus eſt; et ſi mortui rogati non aliquando reſponderent, ab hominibus haudquaquam conſulerentur.* Stern. de Morte, ubi ſupr.

‖ Dr. More's immortality of the ſoul, B. 2. c. 16.

lie. All these things put together, and rightly weighed, the violence of prejudice not pulling down the ballance, I dare appeal (saith he) to any, whether it will not be certainly carried for the present cause? And whether any indifferent judge ought not to conclude, if these stories, which are so frequent every where, and in all ages, concerning the ghosts of men appearing, be but true, that it is true, also, that they are their ghosts, *&c.*

These are the strongest arguments I meet with, for the affirmative, that the matter is possible, it may be so; and then adding the credible instances that it is so, the matter seems to be determined.

To this purpose Dr. Sterne alledges several instances out of scripture; as that appearance of Samuel unto Saul, and the conference betwixt them; as also, the letters that were sent to Jehoram, by Elijah, after that Elijah was translated to heaven; as appears by comparing 2 Chron. xxi. 12. with 2 Kings iii. 11. in which it appears, that in Jehoshaphat's time, who preceded this Jehoram, Elijah was dead; and yet, in Jehoram's time, who succeeded him, he is said to receive letters from Elijah. The appearance, and conference also betwixt Christ, and Moses, and Elias, upon the mount, in the presence of some of the disciples, confirms it, Matth. xvii. 3.

These are the principal scripture-instances, others are almost innumerable; from among that vast heap, I will select some few, that are most material, and of clearest credit.

"It is a thing (saith * my author) both known and frequent, "that the inhabitants of the Scottish isles, when their friends "are dying, come to them, and request them, that, upon such "or such a day, after their death, and in such a place, they "would meet them; which the dead accordingly do, at the "time and place agreed upon, and have sometimes discourse "with them."

Infinite examples of murders (saith Dr. More) have been discovered by dreams, the souls of the persons murdered seeming to appear to some or other asleep, and to make their complaints to them; giving us a notable example out of Baronius, of Marcilius Ficinius, who having made a solemn vow with Michael Mercatus, (after they had been pretty warmly disputing of the immortality of the soul, out of the principles of their master

* *Insularum Scoticarum incolæ ad ægros, cum plo deploratis habentur, accedunt, et rogant, ut certo a morte die, locoque certo ipsos conveniant; quod et mortui tempore et loco præstituto præstant*, Sterne. ibid.

Plato) that whether of them two died first, he should appear to his friend, and give him certain information of that truth. It was Ficinius his fate to die first, and that not long after this mutual resolution: He was mindful of his promise, when he had left the body; for Mercatus being very intent at his studies, betimes in a morning, heard a horse riding by with all speed, and observed that he stopt at his window, and therewith heard the voice of his friend Ficinius, crying out, aloud, *O Michael, Michael, vera, vera, sunt illa*; that is, *O Michael, Michael, those things are true, they are true.* Whereupon he suddenly opened his window, and espying Marcilius upon a *white steed*, called after him, but he vanished out of his sight. He sent therefore presently to Florence, to know how Marcilius did, and understood that he died about that hour he called at his window.

Much to the same purpose is that so famous and well attested story of the apparition of major George Sydenham, to captain William Dyke, both of Somersetshire, attested by the worthy and learned Dr. Thomas Dyke, a near kinsman of the captain's; and by Mr. Douch, to whom the major and captain were intimately known *. The sum is this: The major and captain had many disputes about the being of a God, and the immortality of the soul, in which points they could never be resolved, though they much sought for, and desired it; and therefore it was at last fully agreed betwixt them, that he that died first, should, the third night after his funeral, come betwixt the hours of twelve and one, to the little house in the garden adjoining to major Sydenham's house, at Dulverton, in Somersetshire. The major died first, and the captain happened to lie, that very night which was appointed, in the same chamber, and bed, with Dr. Dyke; he acquainted the doctor with the appointment, and his resolution to attend the place, and hour that night, for which purpose he had got the key of that garden. The doctor could by no means divert his purpose, but, when the hour came, he was upon the place, where he waited two hours and a half, neither seeing nor hearing any thing more than usual. About six weeks after, the captain, and doctor, went to Eaton, and lay both in the same inn, but not both in the same chamber, as they had done before at Dulverton.

The morning before they went thence, the captain stayed longer than was usual in his chamber, and at length came into the doctor's chamber, but in visage and form much different

* *Sad. Trium. part* 2. *p.* 183.

from himſelf, with his hair and eyes ſtaring, and his whole body ſhaking and trembling: Whereat the doctor wondering, demanded, What is the matter, couſin captain? the captain replies, I have ſeen my major. At which the doctor ſeeming to ſmile, the captain ſaid, If ever I ſaw him in my life, I ſaw him but now; adding as followeth: This morning (ſaid he) after it was light, ſome one came to my bed-ſide, and ſuddenly drawing back the curtains, calls, *Cap. cap.* (which was the term of familiarity that the major uſed to call the captain by) to whom I replied, What, my *major?* To which he returns, I could not come at the time appointed, but I am now come to tell you, *That there is a God, and a very juſt and terrible one: and if you do not turn over a new leaf, you will find it ſo.* This ſtuck ſo cloſe to him, little meat would go down with him at dinner, though a handſome treat was provided. Theſe words were ſounding in his ears frequently, during the remainder of his life; he was never ſhy, or ſcrupulous to relate it to any that aſked him concerning it, or ever mentioned it, but with horror, and trepidation. They were both men of a briſk humour, and jolly converſation, of very quick, and keen parts, having been both univerſity, and Inns-of-court gentlemen.

The apparition of the ghoſt of Sir George Villiers, father of the duke of Buckingham, giving three ſolemn warnings, by three ſeveral apparitions to his ſervant Mr. Parker, is a known and credible ſtory. But I will wade no farther into particulars, they are almoſt innumerable; let theſe ſuffice for a taſte.

II. In the next place, therefore, I will lay down ſome conceſſions about this matter; and the

Firſt conceſſion is this: *That the ſeparate ſouls, or ſpirits of men, are capable of performing, and executing any miniſtry, or ſervice of God, (if he ſhould pleaſe to commiſſion them ſo to do) as well as angels are, whom we know he frequently employs about the perſons and affairs of his people on earth.*

Though ſouls become not angels by their ſeparation, as Maximus Tyrius calls them, but remain ſpirits ſpecifically diſtinct from them; yet are they ſpiritual ſubſtances, as the angels are: This their nature capacitates them either to live, and act out of the body, or to aſſume (as angels do) an *aerial body*, for the time of their miniſtry: Nor do I know any thing in ſcripture, or philoſophy, repugnant hereunto.

Conceſ. 2. *It cannot be doubted, but, upon ſome ſpecial, and extraordinary reaſons, and occaſions, ſome departed ſouls have returned to, and appeared in this world, by order and commiſſion from God.*

This is too manifeſt to be doubted by any that underſtand and believe the inſtances recorded in ſcripture. Moſes and Elias, long after their departure, appeared to, and talked with Chriſt, upon the holy mount, in the preſence of ſome of his apoſtles, Matth. xvii. 3. nor is there any reaſon to queſtion the reality of their apparition, or to think it to be no more than a *phantaſm*, or imaginary reſemblance of theſe perſons, but very Moſes and Elias themſelves: For they came to be witneſſes to Chriſt's prophetical office, "And it was not * fit ſo great a "point ſhould be atteſted by imaginary witneſſes," or that they ſhould be called Moſes and Elias, if they were not the very ſame perſons.

"'Tis therefore moſt likely they both appeared in their own "bodies †;" for Moſes's body, we know, was hidden by the Lord, and Elias's body was immediately tranſlated, with his ſoul to heaven: When therefore the Lord would ſend them upon this ſolemn errand, the ſoul of Moſes probably reaſſumed that body, which was never found by man, and Elias was already embodied, and fit, immediately, for this expedition.

In like manner we read, Mat. xxvii. 52, 53. that, at the reſurrection of our Lord, "many bodies of the ſaints aroſe, and "appeared unto many:" Theſe were no *phantaſms*, but the very ſouls of the departed ſaints returned (having reaſſumed their own bodies) unto this world, not only to confirm the truth of Chriſt's reſurrection, and adorn that great day, but as a ſpecimen, or handſel of the reſurrection of all the ſaints, in the virtue of his reſurrection, at the great day.

Nor will I deny, but, upon ſome leſſer (though never without weighty and ſolemn) occaſions, and reaſons, God may ſometimes ſend the ſouls of the dead back again into this world, as in caſes before recited, to evidence againſt the *atheiſm* of men, *&c.* ‡ Auguſtine relates a memorable example, which fell out at Milan, where a certain citizen being dead, there came a creditor, to whom he had been indebted, and unjuſtly demanded the money of his ſon: The ſon knew the debt was ſatisfied by his father, but having no acquittance to ſhew, his father appeared to him in his ſleep, and ſhewed him where the acquittance lay. Whether it were the very ſoul of his *father*, or, rather, an *angel*, as Auguſtine thinks, is not certain, tho' the one, as well as the other, is poſſible. But though rarely, and

* *Non enim conveniebat ut veritas mendacio, vel imaginariis teſtibus probaretur.* Maldon. Capellus in loc.

† *Credibilius eſt vere corporibus ſuis apparuiſſe.* Pareus in loc.

‡ *Aug. in lib. de cura pro mortuis agenda.*

upon ſome weighty, and ſolemn occaſions, ſome ſouls have returned, and appeared; yet I judge this is not frequently done upon ſlight, and ordinary errands; and therefore to give you my own thoughts, I judge,

Conceſ. 3. *That thoſe apparitions which ſeem to be, and are generally reputed, and taken for the ſouls of the dead, are not indeed ſo, but other ſpirits, putting on the ſhapes, and reſemblances of the dead, and (for the moſt part) tricks of the devil, to delude, or diſquiet men.*

In this, I think, the learned ‖ Dr. Brown delivered his judgment more ſolidly, and orthodoxly, than in ſome other points; where he ſaith, "I believe that the whole frame of a beaſt doth "periſh, and is left in the ſame ſtate after death, as before it "was materialled into life; that the ſouls of men know neither "contrary, nor corruption; that they ſubſiſt beyond the body; "and continue, by the privilege of their proper nature, and "without a miracle; that the ſouls of the faithful, as they "leave earth, take poſſeſſion of heaven; that thoſe apparitions, "and ghoſts of departed perſons, are not the wandering ſouls "of *men*, but the unquiet walks of *devils*, promoting, and "ſuggeſting us into *miſchief*, *blood*, and *villany*." And with this opinion I concur, as to the ordinary, and common apparitions of the dead. And my reaſons are,

(1.) Becauſe the ſcriptures every where deſcribe the ſtate of departed ſouls as a fixed ſtate, either in heaven, or in hell; and aſſign the good, or evil done in this world by ſpirits, not to the departed ſpirits of men, but to angels or devils: And it is our duty to regulate our conceits by ſcripture, and not according to the vain philoſophy of the heathens, or the ſuperſtitious traditions, and opinions of men.

As for the ſouls of the godly, they are at reſt with Chriſt, Rev. xiv. 13. Iſa. lvii. 2. and as fixed as pillars in the houſe of God, Rev. iii. 12.

And for the wicked, their ſpirits are confined, and ſecured in hell, as in a priſon, 1 Pet. iii. 19. there is a fixed Gulph betwixt them and the living, Luke xvi. 27, to 32.

What good offices are to be done by ſpirits for us, the angels are God's commiſſion-officers to do them. Heb. i. 14. "They "are all miniſtring ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them who "ſhall be heirs of ſalvation:" Theſe are the ſpirits ſent forth to walk to and fro through the earth, Zech. i. 10. Their miniſtry was *emblematically* repreſented in Jacob's viſion, where

‖ *Religio Med. Sect.* 37. *p.* 82.

they were seen ascending and descending as upon a ladder, betwixt heaven and earth, Gen. xxviii. 12. Yea, their very name *angel* is a name of office, signifying a messenger, or one sent.

And for the mischief done by spirits in this world, the scriptures ascribe that to the devils; those unquiet spirits have their walks in this world, they compass the whole earth, and walk up and down in it, Job i. 7. and 1 Pet. v. 8. they can assume any shape; yea, I doubt not but he can act their bodies when dead, as well as he did their souls and bodies when alive: How great his power is this way, appears in what is so often done by him in the bodies of *witches*. They are not ordinarily therefore the spirits of men, but other spirits that appear to us.

(2.) If God should ordinarily permit the spirits of men inhabiting the other world, a liberty so frequently to visit this, what a gap would it open for Satan to beguile and deceive the living! What might he not by this means impose upon weak and credulous mortals? * There hath been a great deal of superstition and idolatry already introduced under this pretence: he hath often personated saints departed, and pretended himself to be the ghost of some venerable person, whose love to the souls of the people, and care for their salvation, drew him from heaven to reveal some special secret to them. Swarms of errors, and superstitious and idolatrous opinions and practices, are this way conveyed, by the tricks and artifices of Satan, among the Papists, which I will not blot my paper withal; only I desire it may be considered, that if this were a thing so frequently permitted by God, as is pretended, upon what dangerous terms had he left his church in this world, seeing he hath left no certain marks by which we may distinguish one spirit from another, or a true messenger from heaven, from a counterfeit and pretended one.

But God hath tied us to the sure and standing rule of his word; forbidding us to give heed to any other voice or spirit leading us another way, Isa. viii. 19. 2 Thes. ii. 1, 2. Gal. i. 8. It was therefore a discret reply which one of the antients made when in a prayer, a vision of Christ appeared to him, and told him, thy prayers are heard, for thou art worthy: the good man immedi-

* For what hath more propagated idolatry among Heathens and Christians? Hence did flow many peregrinations, monasteries, temples, festival-days, and such like. *Dav. on Job* 33.

ately clapt his hands upon his eyes, and said, *Nolo hic videre Christum*, &c. *I will not see Christ here, it is enough for me that I shall behold him in heaven.*

To conclude. My opinon upon the whole is this, that altho' it cannot be denied, but in some grand, extraordinary cases, as at the transfiguration and resurrection of Christ, God did, and perhaps sometimes, tho' rarely, may order or permit departed souls to return into this world; yet, for the most part, I judge those apparitions are not the souls of the dead, but other spirits, and, for the most part, evil ones.

Of this judgment was * St. Augustine, who when he had at full related the story above of the father's ghost directing his son to the accquittance; yet will not allow it to be the very soul of his father, but an angel: Where he farther adds, If (saith he) the souls of the dead may be present in our affairs, they would not forsake us in this sort; especially my mother Monica, who in her life, could never be without me, surely she would not thus leave me being dead.

Obj. 1. *But it was pleaded before, that we allow the apparition of angels; and departed souls, if they be not angels, at least are equal unto angels, and in respect of their late relation to us, are more propense to help us, than spirits of another sort can be supposed to be.*

Sol. It seems too bold, and imposing upon sovereign Wisdom to tell him what messengers are fittest for him to send and employ in his service; who hath taught him, or been his counsellor?

Obj. 2. *But these offices seem to pertain properly to them, as they are not only fellow members, but the most excellent members of the mystical body, to whom it belongs to assist the meaner and weaker.*

Sol. If there be any force of reason in this plea, it carries rather for the angels than for departed souls: for angels are gathered under the same common head with saints; the text tells us, *we are come to an innumerable company of angels:* they and the saints are fellow-citizens, and we know they are a more noble order of spirits; and as for their love to the elect, it is exceeding great, as great to be sure as the departed souls of our dearest relatives can be. For after death they sustain no more civil relation to us: all that they do sustain, is as fellow-members of the same body, or fellow-citizens, which the angels also are as well as they.

* *Lib. de cura mortuis.*

Obj. 3. *But*, saith the doctor, *the reason why all nations pay so great honour, and religious care to the will of the dead, is a supposition that they still continue in the same mind after death, and will avenge the falsifications of trusts upon injurious executors, else no reason can be given why so great a stress should be laid upon the will of the dead.*

Sol. This is *grátis dictum*, to say no worse, a cheap and unwary expression: Can no reason be given for the religious observance of the testaments of the dead, but this supposition? I deny it: for though they that made them be dead, yet God, who is witness to all such acts and trusts, liveth: and though they cannot avenge the frauds, and injustice of men, he both can and will do it, 1 Thess. iv. 6. which, I think, is a weightier ground and reason to enforce duty upon men than the fear of ghosts. Besides, this is a case wherein all the living are concerned, all that die must commit a trust to them that survive; and if frauds should be committed without impunity, who could safely repose confidence in another; *Quod tanget omnes, tangi debet ab omnibus*: that which is of general concernment, and becomes every man's interest, infers a general obligation upon all.

As for the letters of Elijah, it is a vanity to think they came post from heaven; no, no, they were doubtless left behind him, out of due care to the government, and produced on that fit occasion.

Obj. 4. *But what need of a law to prohibit necromancy or consultation with the dead, if it were not practicable?*

Sol. I do not think the wicked art there prohibited enabled them to recal departed souls; but it was a conversing with the devil who personated the dead, and therein a kind of homage was paid him to the dishonour of God; or he might possibly raise the bodies of wicked men, and appear in them: but I think the spirits of the dead return not, except as was before limited.

Obj. 5. *But the matters they discover are found to be true, and the causes in which they concern themselves are just; real murders are detected by them, and real frauds and injuries corrected and rectified: but the devil being himself a liar, and deceiver, would never do it; it is not his interest to discover or discourage such things.*

Sol. Though it be not his interest merely to discover it, yet it is certainly his interest to precipitate wicked men, and hasten their ruin by the hand of justice; and he will speak the truth,

and ſeem to own a righteous cauſe, to bring about his great deſign of ruining the ſouls and bodies of men. I will ſhut up with three cautions.

Caution 1. Strain not conſcience to enrich poſterity: be true to the truſts committed to you by the dead, or by the living, remembring, that though they be dead, and cannot avenge the wrong, yet the Lord lives, and will ſurely do it in a ſeverer manner than they could, ſhould they appear in the moſt terrible and frightful forms to you: Beſides, your own conſciences will haunt you worſe than a ghoſt. Be juſt and true therefore in all your promiſes and truſts, for God is the avenger.

Caution 2. Finiſh your work for eternity before you die; for "as the cloud is conſumed, and vaniſhed away, ſo he that go-"eth down to the grave ſhall come up no more; he ſhall re-"turn no more to his houſe, neither ſhall his place know him "any more," Job. vii. 9, 10. Your ſouls will be fixed in eternity ſoon after they are looſed from your bodies: when death comes, away you muſt go, willing or unwilling, ready or unready; but no returning hither, how willing ſoever.

Caution 3. Keep yourſelves from that heatheniſh and accurſed practice of conſulting the devil about your abſent or dead relations; a practice too common in ſea-port towns, and of deep and heinous guilt before God: Iſa. viii. 19. "And when they ſhall "ſay unto you, ſeek unto them that have familiar ſpirits, and "unto wizards that peep and mutter; ſhould not a people ſeek "unto their God? for the living to the dead?"

You need not call the devil twice, that ſubtle and officious ſpirit draws the living into his net by ſuch a bait as this: You meet your mortal enemy under the diſguiſe of your dead friend.

Query 5. *Whether the ſeparated ſouls of the juſt in heaven have any converſe or communication with each other? and how that can be, ſeeing all the organs and inſtruments of ſpeech and hearing, are laid aſide with their bodies?*

It ſeems impoſſible that ſeparated or unbodied ſpirits ſhould converſe together, ſeeing the inſtruments by which the thoughts are communicated from one to another, are periſhed in the grave. Suppoſe the tongue of a man to be cut out, his eyes and hands periſhed, or made uſeleſs, whilſt the ſoul remains in the body; it may enjoy its own thoughts within itſelf, but it is impoſſible to ſignify them to another by words or ſigns.

Or ſuppoſe a man in a deep ſleep (wherein the ſenſes are only bound for a little time) he may indeed exerciſe his own fancy in a pleaſant dream, but another cannot underſtand how it is entertained; but in death the ſenſes are not bound, but extinguiſhed.

Beside, we must not think the felicity of the departed holy souls to consist in mutual converses one with another, but in their ineffable visions of God, and communion with him. To him who is omniscient, and understands their most inward thoughts, they can freely communicate them, and receive his, as well as pour forth their own love; but to do it to their fellow creatures, who see not as God doth, seems impossible.

Indeed it was never doubted, but after the resurrection they shall both know and talk with one another in a more excellent and perfect manner than now they do; but till that time, the reasons above seem to persuade us, that all the converses above, are only betwixt God and them, which indeed is enough to make them happy; and indeed if this ability be allowed to separated souls, it seems to render the resurrection of their bodies needless; for they are well enough without them. But certainly the spirits of just men are not mutes; such an august assembly of holy and excellent spirits, do not live together in their Father's house without mutual converse and fellowship with each other, as well as with God.

That acute and judicious divine, Mr. Joseph Symonds, in his epistle to his book, intituled, *Sight and faith*, expresseth himself about this matter thus: 'I often think (saith he) of the communion of the spirits of men, which is certainly more than 'many are acquainted with: though we act one upon another 'in our present state, by the help of sense; yet we are wrought 'and designed to a more excellent way. Angels, and the 'spirits of men made perfect, converse and trade in a mutual 'communication, not without sense, but without such sense as 'ours. This, as eternal life, begins here, and is found in some 'degrees in this mortal state, though not in so visible appearances 'as to ly open to much observation.

'Angels, good and bad, do act upon our spirits, and our spirits hold converse with them, and with the Father of spirits, 'which may be discerned in secret parlies and discourses betwixt 'them and us; much of this appears in David's psalms: and 'there passeth not only an inward speech, but there are invisible 'approaches, entertainments and touches, which Paul found 'when bound in the Spirit, and under the working of God, 'which wrought in him mightily, Col. i. 29. It is also most 'certain that our souls are not mute, and shut out from all mutual traffic with each other, except what they have by the 'mediation of senses.

'Instances are found, that (as they say of two needles touched 'with the loadstone) the spirit of one at a distance, hath found

'itself affected with the motion and state of another. And this 'we are all sensible of, that there is a strong desire in us to 'communion of spirits; and that, because the way most ready 'and convenient to our bodily state is by sense, we are carried 'with much inclination to maintain intercourse of our minds 'and spirits by sense; but, as being made to a better way, our 'souls are not satisfied with this present way, as being both 'painful and short. We cannot give an exact copy of our 'apprehensions, desires, designs, delights and other affections, 'by these two great mediators of communion, the eye, and the 'ear: but, because we are in so great a measure confined to 'this course, our souls, as it were, stand in these two gates, to 'send and receive mutual embassies from each other. Which 'way, as it is short in itself, so it is much shortened by distances, 'disaffections, impotencies, and disparities.'

I cannot imagine, that men, in a state of imperfection, should have so many ways to communicate their minds, as by speaking, writing, *&c.* yea, that the very birds, and beasts, are, by nature, enabled to signify to each other their inclinations; and that the spirits of just men (which are the best of all human spirits, and that when made perfect too, which is the best, and highest state attainable by them) should have none, but live at a greater disadvantage, in this respect, than they did, or the very birds, and beasts in this world do. The sum of my thoughts, about this matter, I will lay down in the following sections.

Sect. 1. The state of heaven, (as was at large opened in our eleventh proposition) being an association of angels, and blessed souls, for the glorifying and praising of God in his temple there, and this worship being carried on by joint consent, as appears by their joint ascriptions of glory to God, Rev. vii. 9, 10, 11, 12. they must of necessity, for the orderly carrying on of this heavenly worship, understand each others minds, and communicate their thoughts: for without this it is not imaginable how a joint or common service, in which thousands of thousands are employed, can be decorously and orderly managed, except we conceive of them as so many *machines*, or wind-instruments that are managed by an intelligent agent, though themselves be senseless and merely passive: certainly their consent is a different thing from that of the keys of a *harpsicord*, or strings of a *lute*, they are intelligent beings, who understand their own and each others mind: and besides, without this ability, that society in heaven would be less comfortable, as to mutual refreshing fellowship, than the society of saints is here. So that it is not to be doubted, but these noble and excellent spirits can, and do

communicate their thoughts to each other, and that in a moſt excellent way.

Sect. 2. But yet we cannot imagine theſe communications betwixt them to be by words, formed by ſuch inſtruments, and organs of ſpeech, as we now uſe, for they are bodileſs beings: words, and articulate ſounds, are fitted to the uſe and ſervice of embodied ſpirits. It is therefore probable, that they convey, and communicate their minds to one another, as the bleſſed angels do, not with tongues of fleſh, (though we read of the *tongues of angels*, 1 Cor. xiii. 1.) but in a way ſomewhat analogous to this, though much more noble and excellent *. For look, as the ſcripture ſtiles the moſt excellent food, angels food; ſo the moſt excellent ſpeech, or moſt eloquent tongues, angels tongues. The pureſt rhetoric that ever flowed from the lips of the moſt charming orator, is but babbling, to the language of angels, or of ſpirits made perfect.

When Paul was wrapt into the third heaven, where he was admitted to the ſight, and hearing of this bleſſed aſſembly, it is ſaid he heard ἄρρητα ῥήματα, words unſpeakable, ſpiritual language, ſuch as his tongue neither could, or ought to utter; ſuch as none but heavenly inhabitants can ſpeak. And, Dan. viii. 13. "I heard, (ſaid Daniel) one ſaint ſpeaking, and another "ſaint ſaid unto that certain ſaint that ſpake," *&c.* He heard the enquiries of the angels, deſiring to know the myſtery from the mouth of Chriſt. A language they have, but not like ours.

Sect. 3. The communications of angels, and ſouls in heaven, is therefore conceived to be an ability in thoſe bleſſed ſpirits, ſilently, and without ſound, to inſtil, and inſinuate their minds and thoughts to each other, by a mere act of their wills; juſt as we now ſpeak to God, or ourſelves †, in our hearts, when our lips do not move, or the leaſt outward ſign appears.

There are two ways by which the ſouls of men ſpeak, one outwardly, by the inſtruments of ſpeech, or ſenſible ſigns; the other inwardly, without ſound, or ſign: This inward, ſilent ſpeech, is nothing elſe but an act of the will, calling forth ſuch things into our actual thoughts, and meditations, which before lay hid, and quiet in the memory, or habit of knowledge.

* It is certain angels have not tongues, but ſomething analogous thereunto, by which they commmunicate their thoughts to one another. *Lightfoot.*

† We are ſaid to ſpeak to ourſelves in our hearts, when we actually think upon, or revolve any thing in our minds; but we think actually, at the command of the will, *i. e.* when we will. *Zanch.*

Theſe thoughts, or actual revolvings of things in the mind, are in ſcripture called דבר עם לבבו, a word or ſpeech in the heart, Deut. xv. 9. Take heed to thyſelf, that there be not a wicked word in thy heart; we tranſlate it, *a wicked thought*: thoughts are the words, and voice of the ſoul. And ſo, Mat. ix. 3. they ſpake within themſelves, *i. e.* their ſouls ſpake, though their lips moved not. "All meditation is an inward "ſpeech in the ſoul, and therefore שיח indifferently ſignifies "both to ſpeak, and to meditate *." The objects which we revolve in our thoughts, are ſo many companions with whom we converſe; and thus a man, (like Heinſius) may be in the midſt of abundance of excellent company, when he is all alone. And this is ſilent talk to ourſelves, without any ſound or noiſe.

Obj. But you will ſay, *Though the ſpirit of a man can thus talk to, or with itſelf; yet this can ſignify nothing to others:* For what man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit of a man, that is in him? 1 Cor. ii. 11. *It is not therefore enough to open this internal door of the will; for except we open, alſo, the external † door of the lips, no man can know our minds, or be admitted into the ſecrets of our ſouls: ſhould we never ſo earneſtly deſire that another ſhould know our mind, except we pleaſe, alſo, to diſcover it by a word, or ſign, he cannot know it; and therefore an act of the will is not ſufficient, without ſome external ſignification ſuperadded. And theſe ſouls being bodileſs, can give no outward ſignification.*

Sol. There is, indeed, a neceſſity among men in this world, to unlock another door, beſide that of their will, to communicate the ſecrets of their hearts to others; "but ‡ angels, and

* Ειπον εν αυτοις, שיח, *Cum puncto ſiniſtro, locutus eſt ore, aut corde cogitavit, meditatus eſt.*

† There are two doors with reſpect to others, and unleſs thou open both of theſe, it is not poſſible that another man can know what paſſes in thy mind, or be admitted into the ſecrets of thy heart. On the part of the ſoul, the will is the one door, for unleſs thou incline to reveal to others theſe things which ly hid in thy heart, who can know them? the other door is the body of fleſh itſelf, and therefore, although, having, as it were, opened the firſt and inward door; thou incline to make known unto another what is in the mind, yet he can in no way know this, unleſs thou alſo open the other door which is external. *Zanchius on the works of God, book 3. chap. 29.*

‡ *Quoniam igitur angeli iis carent craſſis corporibus, idcirco nihil impedit, quo minus quæ unus angelus in ſua verſat mente, ea alter videat, niſi voluntas: ſi enim ea nolit ab altero reſciri nunquam, niſi Deo revelante, reſcientur.* Zanch. ubi ſupra.

" the ſpirits of men, having no bodies, conſequently have but " one door, to wit, that of the will, to open; and the open- " ing thereof, (which is done by one act, or deſire, in a " moment) is enough to diſcover ſo much of their minds, as " they would have diſcovered to another ſpirit If they keep " the door of their will ſhut, no angel, or ſpirit, can know " what is in their thoughts, without a revelation from God;" and if they but will, or deſire others ſhould know, no words can ſo fully manifeſt one man's mind to another, as ſuch an act of the will doth manifeſt theirs. And this, ſaith learned Zanchy, is the tongue of angels; and the ſame way the ſpirits of men have to make known their minds in the unbodied ſtate. It is but the turning the key of the will, and their thoughts, or deſires, are preſently ſeen and known, by others, to whom they will diſcover them, as a man's face is ſeen in a glaſs, when he pleaſeth to turn his face to it. Would one ſpirit make known his mind to another, it is but to will he ſhould know it, and it is immediately known.

Sect. 4. This internal way of ſpeaking, and communication among ſpirits, is much more noble, perfect, and excellent, than that which is in uſe among us, by words and ſigns; and that in two reſpects, *viz.*

1. Of clearneſs.

2. Of diſpatch and ſpeed.

1. Spiritual language is more clearly expreſſive of the mind, and thoughts, than words, writings, or any other external ſigns can be. The greateſt maſters of language do often cloud their meaning, for want of words fit, and full enough to expreſs it: truth ſuffers by the poverty and ambiguity of words: many controverſies are but mere ſtrifes about words, and ſcufflings in the dark, by the miſtake of each other's ſenſe and meaning: few have the ability of putting their own meanings into apt, proper, and full expreſſions; and, if they can, yet others, to whom they ſpeak, want an anſwerable ability of underſtanding, and clearneſs of apprehenſion to receive it. If we could diſcern the true and natural ſenſe of things, juſt as it is in the mind of the ſpeaker, or writer, how many controverſies would be thereby quickly ended?

But ſpirits unbodied ſo convey their ſenſe and mind to one another, that there can be no miſtakes, no darkenings of counſel, by words without knowledge; but one receives it juſt as it lies in the other's mind.

2. Spiritual language is more eaſy, and of quicker diſpatch;

some men have voluble tongues, and are more ready, and presential, than others: their tongues are as the pen of a ready scribe; and others, no less ready with their hands, which keep pace with, yea, out-run the tongue of the speaker, as Martial notes.

Currant verba licet, manus est velocior illis;
Nondum lingua suum dextra, peregit opus *.

Yet all this is but bungling work, to the ready dispatch of spirits; one act of the will opens the window to discern the mind of another clearly; so that the converse of spirits must needs be more excellent, in both respects, than any we are accustomed to, or acquainted with in, this world. I will shut up this question with one

Corollary. Long to be associated with the spirits of just men made perfect. You that are going to join that blessed assembly, will even in this respect, gain an invaluable advantage. It is true, there is much of comfort in the present converses of embodied and imperfect saints; it is sweet to fast and pray, to sigh and groan together; it is sweeter to rejoice and praise our God together; it is sweet to talk of heaven with our faces thitherward; but alas! what is this to the converses that are among the spirits of just men made perfect? With what melting hearts have we sometimes sat, under the doctrine of the gospel? How have our ears been chained with delight to the preachers lips, whilst he hath been discoursing of those ravishing subjects, *Christ*, and *Heaven!* But, alas! how dry, and dull a thing is the best of this, to the language of heaven! Three things debase and spoil the communications of the saints on earth, *viz.* the darkness, dulness, and frothiness thereof.

1. The darkness and ignorance of our understandings. How crude, weak, and indigested are our highest and purest notions of spiritual things! we speak of them but as children, 1 Cor. xiii. 11. for, alas! the vail is yet upon our faces. The body of sin, and the body of flesh cast a very dark shadow upon the world to come; but the apprehensions of separated souls are most bright and clear. This darkness begets mistakes; mistakes beget so many quarrels, and janglings, that our fellowship on earth loseth, at once, both its profit and pleasure.

2. There is much dulness and deadness accompanying the communion of saints on earth, abundance of precious time is wasted among us, in unprofitable silence, and when we engage in discourses of heaven, that discourse is often little better than

* *Martial. Epigr. lib.* 14. *ep.* 176.

ſilence; our words freeze betwixt our lips, and we ſpeak not with that concernedneſs and warmth of ſpirits, which ſuits with ſuch ſubjects.

It is not ſo among our brethren above; their affections are at the higheſt pitch, giving *glory to God in the higheſt.*

3. To conclude; In the diſcourſes of the beſt of men on earth, there is too much froth and vanity; many words, like water, run away at the waſte ſpout, but there God is the centre, in which all terminates. O therefore let us long to be among the unbodied people! this world will never ſuit us with companions in all things agreeable to the deſires of our hearts. The beſt company are got together in the upper room; an hour there is better than an age below. Whatever fellowſhip ſaints leave on earth, they ſhall be ſure to find better in heaven.

Query 6. *Whether the ſeparated ſouls of the juſt in heaven, do incline to a re-union with their own bodies? And how that re-union is at laſt affected?*

That theſe bleſſed ſouls have no ſuch inclination, or deſire, theſe reaſons ſeem to perſuade.

1. That their bodies, whilſt they lived in them, were no better than ſo many priſons; many were the prejudices, damages, and miſeries they have ſuſtained and ſuffered in them. It kept them at an uncomfortable diſtance from the Lord, 2 Cor. v. 6. their bemoaning cries ſpake their uneaſy ſtate: how often hath every gracious ſoul, thus lamented itſelf, "Wo is me that I "dwell in Meſheck." It incloſed their ſouls within its mud walls, which intercepted the light and joy of God's face. Death therefore did a moſt friendly office, when it ſet it at liberty, and brought it forth into its own pure and pleaſant light and liberty *. Theſe bleſſed ſpirits now rejoice as priſoners do in their recovered liberty; and can it be ſuppoſed, after all theſe ſufferings, groans, and ſighs, to be diſſolved, they can be willing to be embodied again? Surely there is as little reaſon for ſouls at liberty to deſire to be again embodied, as there is

* The body obſtructs and obſcures the mind in its conceptions, and pollutes it by its union with the fleſh; hence the light of the mind is more defective, as it paſſes, in a manner, through a glaſs of fleſh: doubtleſs, when, by the power of death, the ſoul is, as it were, ſqueezed out of the body, to which it was ſo cloſely united; and in this manner purified, then it breaks from its confinement in the body, to a pure and unmixed light, ſuitable to its nature. *Tertullian on the ſoul.*

for a bird got out of the snare or cage, to fly back again to its place of confinement and restraint. Yea, when we consider how loth some holy souls, when under the excruciating pains of sickness, and as yet in the sight of this alluring world, have been to hear of a return to it by the recovery of their health; we cannot think, but, being quite out of the sight of this, and in the fruition of the other world, the thoughts of the body must needs be more lothsome to them than ever.

We read, that when a good man, in time of his sickness was told by his friends, that some hopeful signs of his recovery began now to appear, he answered, And must I then return to this body? I was as a sheep driven out of the storm almost to the fold, and then driven back into the storm again: or as a weary traveller near his home, who must go back again to fetch something he had neglected: or as an apprentice, whose time was almost out, and then must begin a new term. Of some others it hath been also noted, that the greatest infirmities they discovered upon their death-bed, have been their too passionate desires to be dissolved, and their unsubmissiveness to God's will in their longer stay in the body. Now, the bodies of the saints being so cheerfully forsaken, and that only upon a foretaste of heaven by faith; how can it be thought they should find any inclination to a re-union, when they are so abundantly satisfied with the joys of his face in heaven? Certainly the body hath been no such pleasant habitation to the soul, that it should cast an eye or thought that way, when it is once delivered out of it: if it were burdensome here, a thought of it would be lothsome there.

2. We have shewed before, that the separate soul wants not the help of the body, but lives and acts at a more free and comfortable rate than ever before. It is true, it is not now delighted with meat and drink, with smells and sounds, as it was wont to be; but then it must be considered, that it is happiness and perfection not to need them. It is now become equal to the angels in the way and manner of its living; and what it enjoyed by the ministry of the body, it eminently and more perfectly enjoys without it. What perfections can the soul receive from matter †? What can a lump of flesh add to a spirit? And if it can add nothing to it, there is no reason why it should hanker after it, and incline to a re-union with it. It added nothing of

† The rational soul receives no perfection from matter, which it could not receive without it; therefore, when it shall be separated from it, it is not said to have a propensity to it. *Gamack.*

happiness to it, but much trouble, and therefore becomes justly undesireable to it.

3. The supposition of such a propension and inclination, seems no way to suit with that state of perfect rest which the souls of the just enjoy in heaven. The scripture tells us, that at death they enter into rest, Isa. lvii. 2. Heb. iv. 9. That they rest from their labours, Rev. xiv. 13. But that which inclines and desires (especially when the desired enjoyment, as in this case, is suspended so long) must be as far from rest, as it is from satisfaction in the enjoyment of the thing desired. We know what Solomon hath observed of such a life, (and his observation is experimentally true), that "hope deferred makes the heart "sick," Prov. xiii. 12. Who finds not his own desires a very rack to him in such cases? If we be kept but a few days in earnest expectation, and desire of an absent friend, and he comes not, what an uneasy life do we life! But here we must suppose some have such an unsatisfied life for hundreds, and others for thousands of years already; and how much longer they may remain so, who can tell? We use to say, Lovers hours are full of eternity. These reasons seem to carry it for the negative.

But if the matter be weighed once more, with the following reasons in the counterscale, and prejudice do not pull down the ballance; we shall find the contrary conclusion much more strong and rational. For,

Arg. 1. The soul and body are the two constitutive parts of man; either of these being wanting, the man is not complete and perfect. The good of the whole is the good of the parts themselves; and every thing hath a natural desire and appetite to its own good and perfection *. It is confessed, the soul, for so much as concerns itself singly, is made perfect, and enjoys blessedness in the absence of the body; but this is only the perfection and blessedness of one part of man; the other part *viz.* the body, lies in obscurity and corruption: and till both be blessed, and blessed together, in a state of composition and re-union, the whole man is not made perfect. For this therefore the soul must wait.

* A separate soul has a propensity to union with the body, for it desires the actual constitution of the whole compound being, seeing it is for this, as its end, that it exists, and is found within the compass of real beings. And this is that perfection which the soul obtains by that propensity: for the good of the whole compound being is the good of the parts themselves. It must therefore be affirmed, that the separate soul naturally desires the resurrection. *Alsted. mirab. theol. part* 2. *p.* 214, 215.

Arg. 2. Though death hath diſſolved the union, yet it hath not deſtroyed the relation betwixt the ſoul and the body; that duſt is more to it than all the duſt of the whole earth. Hence it is that the whole perſon of a believer is ſometimes denominated from that part of him, namely, his body, which remains captivated by death in the grave. Hence, 2 Theſſ. iv. 15. dead believers are called *thoſe that ſleep*, which muſt needs properly reſpect the body, for the ſoul ſleeps not, and ſhews what a firm and dear relation ſtill remains betwixt theſe abſent friends. Now we all know the mighty power of a relation, if it be at leaſt among entities, yet ſurely it is one of the greateſt things in the world in efficacy.

It is difficult to bear the abſence of our dear relatives, eſpecially if we be in proſperity, and they in adverſity: As the caſe here is betwixt the ſpirit in heaven, and its body in the grave; this aſſociated with angels, that prey'd upon by worms. Joſeph's caſe is the livelieſt emblem that occurs to my preſent thoughts to illuſtrate the point in hand. He was advanced to be lord over all Egypt, living in the greateſt pomp and ſplendor there; but his father, and brethren, were, at the ſame time, ready to periſh, in the land of Canaan, Gen. xliii. 29, 30, 31. He had been many years ſeparated from them, but neither the length of time, nor honours of the court, could alienate his affections from them. O ſee the mighty power of relation! no ſooner doth he ſee his brethren, and underſtand their caſe, and the pining condition of Jacob, his father, but his bowels yerned, and his compaſſions rolled together for them; yea, he could not forbear, nor ſtifle his own affections, though he knew how injurious his brethren had been to him, and betrayed him, as the body hath the ſoul: Yet notwithſtanding all this, he breaks forth into tears, and outcries, over them, which made the houſe ring again with the news that Joſeph's brethren were come. Nor could he be at reſt in the lap of honour, and plenty, until he had got home his dear, and ancient relations to him. Thus ſtands the caſe betwixt ſoul and body.

Arg. 3. The regret, reluctancy, and ſorrows expreſſed by the ſoul at parting, do ſtrongly argue its inclination to a re-union with it, when it is actually ſeparated from it: For why ſhould we ſurmiſe, that the ſoul, which mourned, and groaned ſo deeply at parting, which claſped, and embraced it ſo dearly, and affectionately, which fought, ſtruggled, and diſputed the paſſage with death, every foot, and inch of ground it got, and would not part with the body, till by plain force it was rent out of its arms; ſhould not, when abſent, deſire to ſee, and

enjoy its old, and indeared friend again? Hath it lost its affection, though it continue its relation? That is very improbable: Or doth its advancement in heaven make it regardless of its body, which lies in contempt, and misery? That is an effect which Christ's personal glory never produced in him towards us, nor a good man's preferment would produce in him to his poor and miserable friends in this world, as we see in the case of Joseph, just now instanced in. It is therefore harsh, and incongruous, to suppose the soul's love to the body was extinguished in the parting hour, and that now, out of sight, out of mind.

Object. But was it not urged before, in opposition to this assertion, that the souls of the righteous looked upon their bodies as their prisons, and sighed for deliverance by death, and greatly rejoiced in the hope, and foresight of that liberty death would restore them to? How doth this consist with such reluctancies at parting, and inclinations to re-union?

Sol. The objection doth not suppose any man to be totally free from all reluctancies, and unwillingness to die; the holiest souls that ever lived in bodies of flesh, will give an unwilling shrug, when it comes to the parting point, 2 Cor. v. 2. but this their willingness to be gone, arises from two other grounds, which make it consistent enough with its reluctancies at parting, and inclination to a second meeting.

(1.) This willingness to die, doth not suppose the soul's love to the body to be utterly extinguished, but mastered, and overpowered by another, and stronger love. There is in every Christian a double love, one natural to the body, and the things below, the other supernatural, to Christ, and the things above; the latter doth not extinguish, though it conquer, and subdue the other. Love to the body pulls backward, love to Christ pushes forward, and finally prevails. This is so consistent with it, that it supposes natural reluctation, and unwillingness to part.

(2.) The willingness of God's people to be dissolved, must not be understood absolutely, but comparatively; in that sense the apostle will be understood, 2 Cor. v. 8. "We are confident, "I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and pre-"sent with the Lord," *(i. e.)* rather than to live always a life of sin, sorrow, and absence from God; death is not desirable in, and for itself, but only as it is the soul's outlet from sin, and its inlet to God.

So that the very best desire is but comparatively, and it is but few who find the love of this animal life subacted, and overpowered by high-raised acts of faith, and love. The genera-

lity; even of good ſouls, feel ſtrong renitencies, and ſuffer ſharp conflicts at their diſſolution; all which diſcovers with what lothneſs, and unwillingneſs, the ſoul unclaſps its arms, to let go its body. Now, as divines argue the frame of Chriſt's heart in heaven, towards his people on earth, from all thoſe endearing paſſages, and demonſtrations of love he gave them at parting; ſo we here argue the continued love, and inclination of the ſoul to its body after it is in heaven, from the manifold demonſtrations it gave of its affection to it in this world, eſpecially in the parting hour. No conſiderations, in all the world, leſs than the more full fruition of God, and freedom from ſin, could poſſibly have prevailed with it to quit the body, though but for a time, and leave it in the duſt. Which is our third argument.

Arg. 4. And as the dolorous parting hour evidenceth it, ſo doth the joy with which it receives it again, at the reſurrection. If it part from it ſo heavily, and meet it again with joy unſpeakable; ſure, then, it ſtill retaineth much love for it, and deſires to be re-eſpouſed to it, in the interval. Now, that its meeting in the reſurrection, is a day of joy, to the ſoul, is evident, becauſe it is called *the time of refreſhment*, Acts iii. 19. and they *awake with ſinging, out of the duſt*, Iſa. xxvi. 19. If the direct and immediate ſcope of the prophet points not (as ſome think it doth) at the reſurrection, yet it is allowed by all, to be a very lively alluſion to it, which is ſufficient for my purpoſe: And, indeed, none that underſtand, and believe the deſign, and buſineſs of that day, can poſſibly doubt but there was reaſon enough to call it a time of refreſhment, a ſinging morning; for the ſouls of the righteous come from heaven with Chriſt, and the whole hoſt of ſhouting angels, not to be ſpectators only, but the ſubjects of that days triumph: They come to re-aſſume, and be re-eſpouſed to their own bodies, this being the appointed time for God to vindicate and reſcue them from the tyrannical power of the grave, to endow them with ſpiritual qualities, at the ſecond marriage to their ſouls, that in both parts they may be completely happy. O the joyful claſpings, and dear embraces, betwixt them! who, but themſelves, can underſtand! And, by the way, this removes the objection before-mentioned, of the miſeries and prejudices the ſoul ſuffered in this world, in, and from the body; for now it receives it a ſpiritual body, (*i. e.*) ſo ſubdued to, and fitted for the uſe of the ſpirit, as never to impede, clog, or obſtruct its motions, and inclination any more, 1 Cor. xv. 44. In this hope it parted from it, and with this conſolation it now receives it again.

Arg. 5. There are many ſcriptures which very much favour, if they do not poſitively conclude for the ſoul's inclination to, and deſire to be re-united with its own body, even whilſt it is in the ſtate of its ſingle glorification in heaven: Certainly our ſouls leave not their bodies at death, as the *oſtrich* doth her egg in the ſand, without any further regard to it, or concernment for it; but they are repreſented as crying to God to remember, avenge, and vindicate them, Rev. vi. 10, 11. "How long, "Lord, how long wilt thou not avenge our blood?" *Our blood* ſpeaks both the continued relation, and ſuitable affection they have to their abſent bodies.

And to the ſame ſenſe * a judicious and learned pen expounds that place, Job xiv. 14. (which is commonly, but I know not how fitly, accommodated to another purpoſe) "All the days of "my appointed time will I wait till my change come." Which words, by a diligent comparing of the context, appears to have this for their proper ſcope and ſenſe.

'Job in the former verſe had expreſſed his confidence by 'way of petition, that at a ſet and appointed time God would 'remember him, ſo as to recal him out of the grave; and now, 'minded to ſpeak out more fully, puts the queſtion to himſelf, "If a man die, ſhall he live again?' And thus anſwers it, 'All "the days of my appointed time' (that is, of the appointed 'time which he mentioned before, when God ſhould revive 'him out of the duſt) 'will I wait till my change come;' that 'is, that glorious change, when the corruption of a lothſome 'grave ſhould be exchanged for immortal glory: Which he 'amplifies, and utters more expreſsly, ver. 15. 'Thou ſhalt "call, and I will anſwer; thou ſhalt have a deſire to the work "of thy hands:' Thou wilt not always forget to reſtore and 'perfect thine own creature. And ſurely this waiting is not 'the act of his inanimate ſleeping duſt, but of that part which 'ſhould be capable of ſuch an action: *q. d.* I, in that part 'which ſhall be ſtill alive, ſhall patiently wait the appointed 'time of reviving me in that part alſo, which death and the 'grave ſhall inſult over in a temporary triumph in the mean 'time.'

Upon theſe grounds, I think, the inclination of the ſeparated ſpirits of the juſt to their own bodies to be a juſtifiable opinion. As for the damned, we have no reaſon to think ſuch a re-union to be deſirable to them; for alas, it will be but the increaſe

* Mr. Howe's bleſſedneſs of the righteous, p. 170, 171.

and aggravation of their torments: Which consideration is sufficient to over-power and stifle the inclination of nature, and make the very thoughts of it horrid and dreadful. To what end (as the prophet speaks in another case) is it for them to desire that day? It will be a day of darkness and gloominess to them; re-union being designed to complete the happiness of the one, and the misery of the other.

But before I take off my hand, and dismiss this question, I must remember that I am debtor to two objections.

Object. 1. *The soul can both live, and act separate from the body, it needs it not; and if it do not want, why should it desire it?*

Sol. The life and actings of the glorified are considerable two ways, (1.) Singly and abstractedly for the life and action of one part: And so we confess the soul lives happily, and acts forth its own powers freely in the state of separation. (2.) Personally, or concretely, as it is the life and action of the whole man, and so it doth both need and desire the conjunction or re-union of the body; for the body is not only a part of Christ's purchase, as well as the soul, and to have its own glory, as well as it, but it is also a constitutive part of a complete glorified person; and so considered, the saints are not perfectly happy till this re-union be effected, which is the true ground and reason of this its desire.

Object. 2. *But this hypothesis seems to thwart the account given in scripture of the rest, and placid state of separate souls: for look, as bodies which gravitate and propend do not rest, so neither do souls which incline and desire.*

Sol. There is a vast difference betwixt the tendencies, and propensions of souls in the way to glory, and in glory: We that are absent from the Lord, can find no rest in the way; but those that are with the Lord can rest in Jesus, and yet wait without anxiety, or self-torturing impatience, for the accomplishment of the promises to their absent bodies, Rev. vi. 10, 11.

Corollary. Let this provoke us all to get sanctified souls, to rule and use these their bodies now for God. This will abundantly sweeten their parting at death, and their meeting again at the resurrection of the just; else their parting will be doleful, and their next meeting dreadful. And so much for the doctrine of separation.

The Uses of the Point.

Our way is now open to the improvement, and use of this excellent subject and doctrine of separation; and certainly it

affords as rich an entertainment for our affections, as for our minds, in the following uſes; of which the firſt will be for our information in ſix practical *inferences*.

Infer. 1. If this be the life and ſtate of gracious ſouls after their ſeparation from the body, *Then holy perſons ought not to entertain diſmal and terrifying thoughts of their own diſſolution.*

The apprehenſions and thoughts of death ſhould have a peculiar pleaſantneſs in the minds of believers. You have heard into what a bleſſed preſence and communion death introduceth your ſouls; how it leads you out of a body of ſin, a world of ſorrows, the ſociety of imperfect ſaints, to an innumerable company of angels, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, to that lovely mount Sion, to the heavenly ſanctuary, to the bleſſed viſions of the face of God. Oh! methinks there hath been enough ſaid, to make all the ſouls, in whom the well-grounded hopes of the life of glory are found, to cry out with the apoſtle, "We are confident, I ſay, yea, and willing rather "to be abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord," 2 Cor v. 8.

When good Muſculus drew near his end, how ſweet and pleaſant was this meditation to his ſoul! Hear his ſwan-like ſong:

* *Nil ſupereſt, vitae frigus praecordia captat;*
Sed, tu Chriſte, mihi vita perennis ades:
Quid trepidas anima, ad ſedes arbitura quietis?
En tibi ductor adeſt angelus ille tuus.
Linque domum hanc miſeram, nunc in ſua fata ruentem
Quam tibi fida Dei dextera reſtituet.
Peccaſti? Scio, ſed Chriſtus credentibus in ſe,
Peccata expurgat ſanguine cuncta ſuo.
Horribilis mors eſt? Fateor, ſed proximus vita eſt,
Ad quam te Chriſti gratia certa vocat.
Praeſto eſt de Satana, peccato et morte triumphans
Chriſtus; ad hunc igitur laeta alacriſque migra.

Which may be thus tranſlated.

Cold death my heart invades, my life doth flie:
O Chriſt, my everlaſting life draw nigh.
Why quivereſt thou, my ſoul, within my breaſt?
Thine angel's come to lead thee to thy reſt.
Quit chearfully this drooping houſe of clay;
God will reſtore it in the appointed day.

* *Melchior Adams, in vita Muſculi, p* 385.

Haſt ſinn'd? I know it, let not that be ung'd;
For Chriſt thy ſins, with his own blood hath purg'd.
Is death affrighting? True, but yet withal
Conſider, Chriſt thro' death to life doth call.
He triumphs over Satan, ſin, and death;
Therefore with joy reſign thy dying breath.

Much in the ſame chearful frame was the heart of dying Bullinger *, when his mournful friends expreſſed their ſenſe of the loſs they ſhould ſuſtain by his removal. "Why, ſaid he, if God "will make any farther uſe of my labours in the miniſtry, he "will renew my ſtrength, and I will gladly ſerve him: But if "he pleaſe (as I deſire he would) to call me hence, I am ready "to obey his will; and nothing more pleaſant can befal me, "than to leave this ſinful and miſerable world to go to my Sa-"viour Chriſt." O that all, who are out of the danger of death, were thus got out of the dread of death too.

Let them only tremble, and be convulſed at the thoughts and ſight of death, whoſe ſouls muſt fall into the hands of a ſin-revenging God by the ſtroke of death; who are to breath out their laſt hope with their laſt breath. Death is *yours*, ſaith the apoſtle, 1 Cor. iii. 22. your friend, your privilege, your paſſage to heaven; it is your ignorance of it, which breeds your fears about it.

Infer. 2. *Gather from hence, the abſolute, indiſpenſible neceſſity of your union with Chriſt, before your diſſolution by death.*

Wo to that ſoul which ſhall be ſeparated from its body before it be united with Chriſt: None but the ſpirits of juſt men are made perfect at death. Righteous ſouls are the only qualified ſubjects of bleſſedneſs.

'Tis true, every ſoul hath a natural capacity of happineſs, but gracious ſouls only have an actual meetneſs for glory. The ſcriptures tell us in the plaineſt words, that "without holineſs "no man ſhall ſee the Lord," Heb. xii. 14. that "except we "be regenerate, and born again, we cannot ſee the kingdom "of God," John iii. 3. You make the greateſt adventure that ever was made by man; indeed, an adventure infinitely too great for any man to make, when you ſhoot the gulph of vaſt eternity upon terms of hazard and uncertainty.

* *Si Deo viſum fuerit, mea opera ulterius in eccleſiæ miniſterio uti; ipſe vires ſufficiet, et libens illi parebo; ſin me voluerit (quod opto) ex hac vita evocare, paratus ſum illius voluntati obſequi; ac nihil eſt quod mihi jucundius poſſit contingere, quam ex hoc miſera et corruptiſſimo ſeculo ad Chriſtum ſervatorem meum migrandum ſit.* Idem. p. 503.

What thinkeſt thou, reader? Dareſt thou adventure thy ſoul and eternal happineſs upon it, that the work of regeneration and ſanctification, that very ſame work of grace, on which the Spirit of God has placed all thy hopes of heaven in theſe ſcriptures, is truly wrought by him in thy ſoul? Conſider it well, paule upon it again and again before thou go forth. Should a miſtake be committed here, (and nothing is more eaſy or common, all the world over, than ſuch miſtakes) thou art irrecoverably gone. This venture can be made but once, and the miſcarriage is never to be retrieved afterwards; thou haſt not another ſoul to adventure, nor a ſecond adventure to make of this. Well might the apoſtle Peter call for all diligence to make our calling and our election ſure: That can never be made too ſure, which is ſo invaluable in its worth, and to be but once adventured.

Infer. 3. *How prejudicial is it to dying men to be then incumbred, diverted, and diſtracted about earthly concernments, when the time of their departure is at hand.*

The buſineſs and employment of dying perſons is of ſo vaſt importance and weight, that every moment of their time need to be carefully ſaved, and applied to this their preſent and moſt important concern. How well ſoever you have improved the time of life, believe it, you will find work enough upon your hand at death: dying hours will be found to be buſy and laborious hours, even to the moſt painful, ſerious, and induſtrious ſouls, whoſe life hath been moſtly ſpent in preparations for death. Leave not the proper buſineſs of other days to that day; for that day will have buſineſs enough of its own. Sufficient for that day are the labours thereof. Let a few conſiderations be pondered, to clear and confirm this inference.

Conſider. 1. The buſineſs and employment of dying perſons, is of the moſt ſerious, awful, and ſolemn nature and importance; it is their laſt preparatory work on earth, to their immediate appearance before God their judge, Heb. ix. 27. it is their ſhooting the gulph into eternity, and leaving this world, and all their acquaintance and intereſts therein for ever, Iſa. xxviii. 11. It is therefore a work by itſelf to die, a work requiring the moſt intenſe, deep, and undiſturbed exerciſes of all the abilities and graces of the inner man; and all little enough.

Conſider. 2. Time is exceeding precious with dying men; the laſt ſand is ready to fall, and therefore not to be waſted, as it was wont to be. When we had a fair proſpect of many years before us, we made little account of an hour or day; but now one of thoſe hours, which we ſo careleſsly laviſhed away, is

of more value than all this world to us, especially if the whole weight of eternity should hang upon it, (as oftentimes it doth) then the loss of that portion of time, is the loss of soul, body, and hope for evermore.

Consider. 3. Much of that little precious time of departing souls will be unavoidably taken up, and employed about the inexcusable, pressing calls and necessities of distressed nature; all that you can do for your souls must then be done only by fits and snatches, in the midst of many disturbances, and frequent interruptions: So that it is rarely found, that a dying man can pursue a serious meditation with calm and fixed thoughts: for besides the pains and faintings of the body, the abilities of the mind usually fail. Here also they fall into a sad *dilemma*; if they do not with the utmost intention of mind fix their hearts and thoughts on Christ, they lose their comfort, if godly, and their souls if ungodly; and if they do, *friends* and *physicians* assure them they will destroy their bodies. These are the straits of men bordering close upon eternity; they must hastily catch a few moments in the intervals of pain, and then are put by all again.

Consider. 4. There is no man living but hath something to do for his own soul in a dying hour, and something for others also.

Suppose the best that can be supposed, that the soul be in real union with Christ, and that union be also clear; yet it is seldom found but there are some assaults of Satan: Or if not, yet, how many relations and friends need our experiences and counsels at such a time? How many things shall we have to do after our great and main work is done? And others have a great deal more to do, though as safe as the former. O the knots and objections that are then to be dissolved and answered! The usual onsets and assaults of Satan that are then to be resisted! And yet most dying persons have much more upon their hands than either of the former. The whole work of repentance and faith is to do when time is even done.

Consider. 5. Few, yea, very few, are found furnished with wisdom, experience and faithfulness to give dying persons any considerable assistance in soul-affairs. It may be there may be found among the visitants of the sick, now and then a person who hath a word of wisdom in his heart; but then either he wants opportunity or courage and faithfulness to do the part of a true spiritual friend. Elihu describes the person so qualified as he ought for this work, Job xxxiii. 23, 24. and calls him, *One among a thousand.* Some are too close and reserved, others too trifling and impertinent; some are willing, but want ability;

others are able, but want faithfulness; some cut too deep by uncharitable censoriousness; others skin over the wound too slightly, speaking peace where God and conscience speak none: So that little help is to be expected.

Consider. 6. How much therefore doth it deserve to be lamented, that, where there is so much to do, so little time to do it, and so few to help in the best improvement of it, all should be lost as to their souls by earthly incumbrances and worldly affairs, which might have been done sooner and better in a more proper season! O therefore let me persuade all men to take heed of bringing the proper business of healthful days to their sick beds.

Infer. 4. *What an excellent creature is the soul of man, which is capable, not only of such preparatious for God, whilst it is in the body, but of such sights and enjoyments of God, when it lives without a body.*

Here the Spirit of God works upon it, in the way of grace and sanctification, Eph. ii. 10. The scope and design of this his workmanship, is to qualify and make us meet for the life of heaven, 2 Cor. vi. 5. For this self-same thing, or purpose, our souls are wrought, or moulded, by grace, into quite another frame and temper, than that which nature gave them; and when he hath wrought out and finished all that he intends to be wrought in the way of sanctification, then shall it be called up to the highest enjoyments, and employments for ever, that a creature is susceptible of.

Herein the dignity of the soul appears, that no other creature in this world, beside it, hath a natural capacity, either to be sanctified inherently in this world, or glorified everlastingly in the world to come; to be transformed into the image, and filled with the joy of the Lord. There are *myriads* of other souls in this world, besides ours, but to none of them is the Spirit of sanctification sent, but only to ours: The souls of *animals* serve only to move the dull and sluggish matter, and take in for a few days the sensitive pleasures of the creation, and so expire, having no natural capacity of, or designation for, any higher employment or enjoyment.

And it deserves a most serious animadversion, that this vast capacity of the soul for eternal blessedness, must of necessity make it capable of so much the more misery and self-torment, if at last it fail of that blessedness: For it is apparent they do not perish because they are *uncapable*, but because they are *unwilling*: not because their souls wanted any natural faculty that others have, but because they would not open those they have,

to receive Christ in the way of faith and obedience, as others did.

Think upon this, you that live only to eat, and drink, and sleep, and play, as the birds and beasts of the field do; What need was there of a reasonable soul for such sensual employments? Do not your noble faculties speak your designation for higher uses? And will you not wish to exchange souls with the most vile and despicable *animal* in this world, if it were possible to be done? Certainly it were better for you to have no capacity of eternal blessedness (as they have not) if you do not enjoy it; and no capacity of torment beyond this life (as they have have not) if you must certainly endure it.

Infer. 5. *If our souls and bodies must be separate shortly, how patiently should we bear all lesser separations, that may and will be made, betwixt us and any other enjoyments in this world?*

No union is so intimate, strict, and dear, as that betwixt our souls and bodies. All your relations and enjoyments in this world, hang looser from your souls than your bodies do: and if it be your duty, patiently and submissively, to suffer a painful parting pull from your bodies; it is doubtless your duty, to suffer meekly and patiently a separation from other things, which are but a prelude to it, and a mere shadow of it. It is good to put such cases to ourselves in the midst of our pleasant enjoyments.

I have now many comfortable relatives in the world, wife, children, kindred, and friends; God hath made them pleasant to me, but he may bereave me of all these. Doth not providence ring such changes all the world over? Are not all kingdoms, cities, and towns, full of the sighs and lamentations of widows, orphans, and friends bereaved of their pleasant and useful relations? But if God will have it so, it is our duty to bound our sorrows, remembring the time *is short*, 1 Cor. vii. 29. In a few days we must be stript much nearer, even out of our own bodies by death.

God may also separate betwixt me and my health by sickness, so that the pleasure of this world shall be cut off from me; but sickness is not death, though it be a prelude and step towards it: I may well bear this with patience, who must submissively bear sharper pains than these ere long. Yea, and well may I bear this submissively, considering that by such imbittering and weaning providences, God is preparing me for a much easier dissolution, than if I should live at ease in the body all my days, till death comes to make so great and sudden a change upon me.

God may also separate betwixt me and my liberty by restraint.

it hath been the lot of the best men that ever were in the world; and if it should be ours also, we should not be much startled at it, considering these bodies of ours must be shortly pent up in a straiter, darker, and more loathsome place of confinement, than any prison in this world can be. The grave is a darker place, Job xvii. 13. and your abode there will be longer, Eccl. xi. 8.

These, and all other our outward enjoyments, are separable things, and it is good thus to alleviate our loss of them.

Infer. 6. *How heavenly should the tempers and frames of those souls be, who are candidates for heaven, and must be so shortly numbered with the spirits of just men made perfect.*

It is reasonable that we all begin to be, that which we expect to be for ever; to learn that way of living and conversing, which we believe must be our everlasting life, and business in the world to come. Let them that hope to live with angels in heaven, learn to live like angels on earth, in holiness, activity, and ready obedience.

There is the greatest reason that our minds be there, where our souls are to be for ever. A spiritual mind will be found possible, congruous, sweet, and evidential of an interest in that glory, to all those holy souls, who are preparing and designed for it.

1. It is possible, notwithstanding the clogs and entanglements of the body, to be heavenly-minded. Others have attained it, Phil. iii. 20. Two things make a heavenly conversation possible to men, *viz.*

(1.) The natural abilities of the mind.

(2.) The gracious principles of the mind.

(1.) The natural abilities of the mind, which can, in a minute's time, dispatch a nimble messenger to heaven, and mount its thoughts from this to that world in a moment. The power of cogitation is a rich endowment of the soul, such as no other creature on earth is participant of. Though spiritual thoughts be not the natural growth of the soul, yet thoughts capable of being spiritualized are. And without this ability of projecting thoughts, all intercourse must have been cut off.

(2.) The gracious principles implanted in the soul, do actually incline the mind, and mount its thoughts heaven-ward. Yea, this will prove more than a possibility of a conversation in heaven; whilst saints tabernacle on earth, in bodies of flesh, it will almost prove an impossibility that it should be otherwise, for these spiritual principles setting the bent and tendency of the

heart heaven-ward, we must act against the very law of our new nature, when we place our affections elsewhere.

2. A mind in heaven is most congruous, decorous and comely for those that are the enrolled inhabitants of that heavenly city. Where should a Christian's love be, but where his Lord is! Our hearts and our homes do not use to be long asunder. It becomes you so to think, and so to speak now, as those who make account to be shortly singing *hallelujahs* before the throne.

3. It is most sweet and delightful; no pleasure in this world is comparable to this pleasure; Rom. viii. 6. "To be spiritual-"ly minded is life and peace." It is a young heaven born in the soul in its way thither.

4. To conclude: it is evidential of your interest in it: an agreeable frame is the surest title, Col. iii. 1, 2. Matth. vi. 21. If heaven attract your minds now, it will center them for ever.

Use 2. This doctrine of the separation of the spirits of the just from their bodies, as it lies before you in this discourse, affords a singular help to all the people of God, to entertain lovely and pleasant thoughts of that day; to make death not only an unregretted, but a most pleasant and desireable thing to their souls.

I know there is a pure, simple, natural fear of death, from which you must not expect to be perfectly freed, by all the arguments in the world. And there is a reverential, awful fear of death, which it would be your prejudice and loss to have destroyed. You will have a natural, and ought to have a reverential fear of death: the one flows from your sensitive, the other from your sanctified nature.

But it is a third sort of fear, which doth you all the mischief; a fear springing in gracious souls out of the weakness of their graces, and the strength of their unmortified affections: a fear arising partly out of the darkness of our minds, and partly out of the sensuality and earthliness of our hearts; this fear is that which so convulseth our souls when death is near, and imbitters our lives, even whilst it is at a distance. He that hath been over-heated in his affections to this world, and over-cooled by diversions and temptations, neglects and intermissions, to that world, cannot chuse but give an unwilling shrug, if not a frightful screech at the appearance of death.

And this being the sad case of too many, good and upright souls for the main; and there being so few, even amongst serious Christians, that have attained to that courage and complacence in the thoughts of death, which the apostle speaks of, 2 Cor. v. 8. to be both confident and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord; I will, from

this discourse, furnish them with some special assistance therein. But withal, I must tell you upon what great disadvantages I am here to dispute with your fears: so strong is the current of natural and vicious fear, that except a special hand of God enforce, and set home the arguments that shall be urged, they will be as easily swept away before it, as so many straws by a rapid torrent; nor will it be to any more purpose to oppose my breath to them, than to the tides and waves of the sea.

Moreover, I am fully convinced, by long and often experience, how unsteady and inconstant the frames and tempers of the best hearts are; and that if it be not altogether, yet it is next to an impossibility, to fix them in such a temper as this I aim at is. Where is that man to be found, who after the revolutions of many years, and in those years various dispensations of providence without him, altering his condition, and greater variety of temptations within, can yet say, notwithstanding all these various aspects and positions, his heart hath still held one steady, and invariable tenour and course?

Alas, there be very few (if any) of such a sound and settled temper of mind, whose pulse beats with an even stroke, through all inequalities of condition, alike free and willing at one time, as another, to be unclothed of the body, and to be with Christ. This height of faith, and depth of mortification; this strength of love to Christ, and ardour of holy desire, are degrees of grace to which very few attain.

The case standing thus, it is no more than needs, to urge all sorts of arguments upon our timorous and unsteady hearts; and it is like to prove a hard and difficult task, to bring the heart but to a quiet and unregretting submission to the appointment of God herein, though submission be one of the lowest steps of duty in this case.

If it be hard to fix our thoughts but an hour, on such an unpleasant subject as death, how hard must it be to bring over the consent of the will? If we cannot endure it at a distance, in our thoughts, how shall we embrace, and hug it in our bosoms? If our thoughts fly back with distaste, and impatience, no wonder if our will be obstinate, and refractory: we must first prevail with our thoughts, to fix themselves, and think close to such a subject, before it can be expected we chearfully resign ourselves into the hands of death. We cannot be willing to go along with death, till we have some acquaintance with it; and acquainted with it we cannot be, till we accustom ourselves to think assiduously, and calmly of it. They that have dwelt many

years at death's door, both in respect of the condition of their bodies, and disposition of their minds, yet find reluctancy enough when it comes to the point.

Object. *But if separation from the body be (as it is) an enemy to nature, and there be no possibility to extinguish natural aversation; to what purpose is it, to argue and persuade, where there is no expectation of success?*

Sol. Death is to be considered two ways, by the people of God:

1. As an enemy to nature.
2. As a *medium* to glory.

If we consider it simply in itself, as an enemy to nature, there is nothing in it for which we should desire it; but if we consider it as a *medium*, or passage into glory, yea, the only ordinary way through which all the saints must pass, out of this into a better state; so it will appear not only tolerable, but desirable to prepared souls. Were there not a shore of glory on the other side of these black waters of death, for my own part, I should rather chuse to live meanly, than to die easily. If both parts were to perish at death, there were no reason to persuade one to be willing to deliver up the other; it were a madness for the soul to desire to be dissolved, if it were so far from being better out of the body than in it, that it should have no being at all. But, Christians, let me tell you, death is so far from being a bar, that it is a bridge in your way to glory, and you are never like to come thither, but by passing over it: except, therefore, you will look beyond it, you will never see any desirableness in it. "I desire to be dissolved (saith Paul) and to be "with Christ, which is far better." To be with death is sad, but to be with Christ is sweet; to endure the pains of death is doleful, but to see the face of Christ is joyful; to part with your pleasant habitations is irksome, but to be lodged in the heavenly mansions is most delightful; a parting hour with dear relations is cutting, but a meeting hour with Jesus Christ is transporting; to be rid of your own bodies is not pleasing, but to be rid of sin, and that for ever, what can be more pleasing, to a gracious soul?

You see, then, in what sense I present death as a desirable thing to the people of God; and therefore seeing nature teacheth us, (as the apostle speaks) to put the more abundant comeliness upon the uncomely parts; suffer me to dress up death in its best ornaments, and present it to you in the following arguments, as a beautiful, and comely object of your conditional, and well-regulated desires. And,

Arg. 1. *If upon a fair and just account, there shall appear to*

be more gain to believers in death, than there is in life; reason must needs vote death to be better to them that are in Christ, than life can be: and consequently, it should be desirable in their eyes.

'Tis a clear dictate of reason, in case of choice, to chuse that which is best for us. Who is there that freely exercises reason, and choice together, that will not do so?

What merchant will not part with a hundred pound's worth of glass beads, and pendants, for a tun of gold? A few tinsel toys, for as many rich diamonds? *Mercatura est amittere, ut lucreris;* that is true merchandise, to part with things of lesser, for things of greater value.

Now, if you will be tried, and determined by God's book of rates, then the case is determined quickly, and the advantage appears exceedingly upon death's side. Phil. i. 21. "To me "to live, is Christ; and to die, is gain."

Object. *True, it might be so to Paul, who was eminent in grace, and ripe for glory; but it may be loss to others, who have not attained the height of his holiness, or assurance.*

Sol. The true and plain sense of the objection is this, whether heaven, and Christ, be as much gain to him that enjoys them, though behind others both in grace and obedience, as it is to them who are more eminent in grace, and have done, and suffered more for their sake? And let it be determined by yourselves. But if your meaning be, that Paul was ready for death, and so are not you; his work and course was almost comfortably finished, and so is not yours; his death, therefore, must needs be gain to him, but it may be loss to you, even the loss of all that you are worth for ever.

To this I say, the wisdom of God orders the time of his people's death, as well as all other circumstances about it: And in this, your hearts may be at perfect rest, that being in Christ, you can never die to your loss, die when you will. I know you will reply, That if your union with Christ were clear, the controversy were ended; but then you must also consider, they are as safe who die by an act of recumbency upon Christ, as those that die in the fullest assurance of their interest in him.

And beside, your reluctancies, and aversations to death, are none of your way to assurance; that such a strong aversation to die, and such a vehement desire after, and love to Christ, as can make you willing to quit all that is dear, and desirable to you in this world for his sake, is the very next door or step to assurance; and if the Lord bring your hearts to this frame, and fix them there, it is not likely you will be long without it.

But to return: Paul had here valued life, with a full allow-

ance of all the benefits and advantages of it; "To me to live, "is Chriſt;" that is, if I live, I ſhall live in communion with Chriſt, and ſervice for Chriſt, and in the midſt of all thoſe comforts which uſually reſult from both. Here is life, with the moſt weighty, and deſirable benefits of it, laid in one ſcale, and he lays death, and, probably, a violent death too, (for of that he ſpeaks to them afterwards, chap. ii. 17.) in the other ſcale. Thus he fills the ſcale, and the balance breaks on death's ſide; yea, it comes down with a πολλῳ μαλλον κρεισσον, a far, far better.

But here falls in (as an excellent perſon * obſerves) a rub in the way: there are in this caſe two judges, the fleſh, and the ſpirit, and they cannot agree upon the values, but contradict each other. Nature ſaith, It is far better to live, than to die, and will not be beaten off from it. What then? I hope you will not put blind and partial nature in competition with God alſo, as you do life with death. But ſeeing nature can plead ſo powerfully, as well as grace, let us hear what thoſe ſtrong reaſons are, that are urged by the fleſh on life's ſide, and what the ſoul hath to reply, and plead on death's ſide, (for the ſoul can plead, and that charmingly too, though not by words and ſounds) and then determine the matter as we ſhall ſee cauſe: but be ſure prejudice pull not down the balance.

1. *The pleas of nature for life, and againſt diſſolution.*

And here the doleful voice of nature laments, pleads, and bemoans itſelf to the willing ſoul.

'O my ſoul, what doſt thou mean by theſe 'deſires to be diſſolved? Art thou in earneſt, 'when thou ſayeſt thou art willing to leave 'thine own body, and be gone? Conſider; and think again, 'ere thou bid me farewel, what thou art to me, and what I 'have been, and am to thee; thou art my ſoul, that is, my 'prop, my beauty, my honour, my life, and, indeed, all that is 'comfortable to me. If thou depart, what am I but a ſpecta-'cle of pity, an abhorred carcaſs, in a few moments? a prey 'to the worms, a captive to death? If thou depart, my candle 'is put out, and I am left in the horrors of darkneſs.

'I am thy houſe, thy delightful habitation, the houſe in 'which thou haſt dwelt from the firſt moment of thy creation, 'and never lodgeſt one night in any other: every room in me 'hath one way or other been a banqueting-room for thy en-'tertainment, a room of pleaſure; all my ſenſes have been pur-

* Mr. How, in Mrs. Margaret Baxter's funeral ſermon.

'veyors for thy delight, my members have all of them been 'thine inſtruments and ſervants, to execute thy commands and 'pleaſure. If thou and I part, it muſt be in a ſhower; thou 'ſhalt feel ſuch pains, ſuch travailing throws, ſuch deep, em-'phatical groans, ſuch ſweats, ſuch agonies as thou never felt 'before: for death hath ſomewhat of anguiſh peculiar to itſelf, 'and which is unknown, though gueſſed at by the living. Be-'ſides, whenever thou leaveſt me, thou leaveſt all that is, and 'hath been comfortable to thee in this world: thy houſe ſhall 'know thee no more, Job vii. 10. thy lands, thy money, thy 'trade, which have coſt thee ſo many careful thoughts, and 'yielded thee ſo many refreſhments, ſhall be thine no longer; 'death will ſtrip thee of all theſe, and leave thee naked.

'Thou haſt alſo, ſince thou becameſt mine, contracted ma-'nifold relations in the world, which I know are dear unto thee; 'I know it by coſtly experience: How haſt thou made me to 'wear and waſte myſelf, in labours, cares, and watchings for 'them? But if thou wilt be gone, all theſe muſt be left expo-'ſed, God knows to what wants, abuſes, and miſeries! for I 'can do nothing for them, or myſelf, if once thou leave me.' Thus it charms and pleads; thus it layeth, as it were, violent hands upon the ſoul, and ſaith, 'O my ſoul, thou ſhalt not 'depart.' It hangs about it much, as the wife and children of good Galeacius Caracciolus did about him, when he was leav-ing Italy, to go to Geneva, (a lively emblem of the caſe before us). It ſaith to the ſoul, as Joab did to David, "Thou haſt "ſhamed thy face this day, in that thou loveſt thine enemy, "death, and hateſt me, thy friend." 'O my ſoul! my life! 'my darling! my dear and only one! let nothing but una-'voidable neceſſity part thee and me.' All this the fleſh can plead, and a great deal more than this, and that a thouſand times more powerfully and feelingly, than any words can plead the caſe. And all its arguments are back'd by ſenſe; ſight, and feeling atteſt what nature ſpeaks.

2. *The pleas of faith in behalf of death.*

Let us, in the next place, weigh the pleas, and reaſons, which, notwithſtanding all this, do over-power, and prevail with the believing ſoul to be gone, and quit its own body, and return no more to the elementary world.

And thus the power of faith and love enables it to reply:

'My dear body, the companion and partner of my comforts 'and troubles, in the days of my pilgrimage on earth, great is 'my love, and ſtrong are the bonds of my affections to thee. 'Thou haſt been tenderly, yea, exceſſively beloved by me; my

'cares and fears for thee have been inexpressible, and nothing 'but the love of Jesus Christ is strong enough to gain my con-'sent to part with thee; thy interest in my affection is great, 'but as great as it is, and as much as I prize thee, I can shake 'thee off, and thrust thee aside, to go to Christ.

'Nor may this seem absurd, or unreasonable, considering that 'God never designed thee for a mansion, but only a temporary 'tabernacle to me: it is true, I have had some comfort during 'my abode in thee; but I enjoyed these comforts only in thee, 'not from thee; and many more I might have enjoyed, hadst 'thou not been a snare and a clog to me.

'It is thou that hast eaten up my time, and distracted my 'thoughts, ensnared my affections, and drawn me under much 'sin and sorrow: however, though we may weep over each o-'ther, as accessories to the sins and miseries we have drawn u-'pon ourselves; yet in this is our joint-relief, that the blood 'of Christ hath cleansed us both from all sin.

'And therefore I can part the more easily, and comfortably 'from thee, because I part in hope to receive, and enjoy thee 'in a far better condition than I leave thee. It is for both our 'interests to part for a time; for mine, because I shall thereby 'be freed and delivered from sin and sorrow, and immediately 'obtain rest with God, and the satisfaction of all my desires in 'his presence, and enjoyment, which there is no other way to 'obtain, but by separation from thee: and why should I live a 'groaning, burdened, restless life always, to gratify thy fond 'and irrational desires? If thou lovest me, thou wouldst rejoice, 'not repine at my happiness. Parents willingly part with their 'children at the greatest distance, for their preferment, how 'dearly soever they love them; and dost thou envy, or repine 'at mine? I have lived many months a suffocating, obscure 'life, with thee in the womb, and neither you nor I had ever 'tasted or experienced the comforts of this world, and the va-'rious delights of sense, if we had not struggled hard for an 'entrance into this world. And now we are here, alas! though 'thou art contented to abide; I live in thee, but as we both 'lived in the womb, an obscure, uneasy, and unfuitable life; 'thou canst feed upon material bread, and delight thyself a-'midst the variety of sensitive objects thou findest here; but 'what are all these things to me? I cannot subsist by them; 'that which is food to thee, is but chaff, wind, and vanity to 'me: if I stay with thee, I shall be still sinning, and still groan-'ing; when I leave thee, I shall be immediately freed from 'both, and arrive at the sum and perfection of all the hopes,

'desires, and whatsoever I have aimed at, and laboured for, in 'all the duties of my life. Let us therefore be content to part.

'Shrink not at the horror of a grave; it is, indeed, a dark 'and solitary house, and the days of darkness may be many; 'but to thee, my dear companion, it shall be a bed of rest, yea, 'a perfumed bed, where thy Lord Jesus lay before thee: and 'let the time of thy abode there be never so long, thou shalt 'not measure it, nor find the least tediousness in it; a thousand 'years there, shall seem no more in the morning of the resur-'rection, than the sweetest nap, of an hour long, seemed to be 'when I was wont to lay thee upon thy bed to rest.

'The worms in the grave shall be nothing to thee, nor give 'thee the thousandth part of that trouble that a flea was wont 'to do; and though I leave thee, Jesus Christ shall watch, in 'the mean time, over thy dust, and not suffer a grain of it to 'be lost: and I will return, assuredly to thee again, at the time 'appointed; I take not an everlasting farewel of thee, but de-'part for a time, that I may receive thee for ever. To con-'clude, there is an unavoidable necessity of our parting; whe-'ther willing or unwilling, we must be separated: but the con-'sent of my will to part with thee, for the enjoyment of Jesus 'Christ, will be highly acceptable to God, and greatly sweeten 'the bitter cup of death to us both.'

This, and much more, the gracious soul hath to say for its separation from the body; by which it is easy to discern where the gain and advantage of death lies, to all believers, and consequently, how much must it be, every way, their interest to be unbodied.

Arg. 2. To be weary of the body, upon the pure account and reason of our hatred to sin, and longing desires after Jesus Christ, argues strongly grace in truth, and grace in strength; it is both the test of our sincerity, and measure of our attainment, and maturity of grace, and, upon both accounts, highly desirable by all the people of God.

It is so great an evidence of the truth of grace, that the scriptures have made it the descriptive periphrasis of a Christian: so we find it in 2 Tim. iv. 8. the crown of life is there promised, to all them that love the appearance of Christ, *i. e.* those that love to drink of it, that delight to steep their thoughts in subjects belonging to the other world, and cast many a yearning look that way: and 2 Pet. iii. 12. they are described to be such as are "looking for, and hastening to the coming of the day "of God." Their earnest expectations, and longings, do not

only put them upon making all the haste they can to be with Christ, but it makes the interposing time seem so tedious, and slow, that with their most vehement wishes and desires, they do what they can to accelerate and hasten it. As Rev. xxii. "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." Lovers hours, saith the proverb, are full of eternity. 'O, said Mr. Rutherford, that 'Christ would make long strides! O that he would fold up the 'heavens, as a cloak, and shovel time and days out of the way!' Such desires as these, can spring from none but gracious and renewed souls; for nature is wholly disaffected to a removal hence, upon such motives and considerations as these: if others wish, at any time, for death, it is but in a pet, a present passion, provoked by some intolerable anguish, or great distress of nature: but to look, and long, and hasten to the other world, out of a weariness of sin, and a hearty willingness to be with Christ, supposes necessarily a deep-rooted hatred of sin, abhorring it more than death itself, the greatest of natural evils, and a real sight of things invisible by the eye of faith, without which it is impossible any man's heart should be thus framed and tempered.

And as it evidenceth the truth, so also the strength and maturity of grace; for, alas, how many thousands of gracious souls, that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, are to be found quite below this temper of mind! O it is but here and there one, among the Lord's own people, that have reached this height and eminence of faith and love. It is with the fruits of the Spirit, just as it is with the fruits of the earth; some are green and raw, others are ripe and mellow: the first stick fast on the branches, you may shake and shake again, and not one will drop; or as those fruits that grow in hedges, with their coats and integuments enwrapping them, as nuts, *&c.* you may try your strength upon them, and sooner break your nails, than disclose and separate them: so fast and close do their husks stick to them: but when time and the influences of heaven, have ripened and brought them to perfection, the apples drop into your hands without the least touch, and the nut falls out of its case, of its own accord. So, much more, doth the soul part from its body, when maturated, and come to its strength, and vigour.

Arg. 3. It may greatly prevail upon the will and resolution of a believer, to adventure boldly and cheerfully upon death, that our bodies, of which we are bereaved and deprived by death, shall be most certainly and advantageously restored to us by the resurrection. The resurrection of the dead is the encouragement and consolation of the dying; the more our faith is established in the doctrine of the resurrection, the more we

shall surmount the fears of dissolution. If Paul urged it as an argument to reconcile Philemon to his servant Onesimus, ver. 15. "That he therefore departed for a season, that Philemon "might receive him for ever;" the same argument may reconcile every believer to death, and take off the prejudice of the soul against it. You shall surely receive your bodies again, and enjoy them for ever.

Now the doctrine of the resurrection is as sure in itself, as it is comfortable to us; the depth, and strength of its foundation, fully answers to the height, and sweetness of its consolation. Be pleased to try the two pillars thereof, and see which of them may be doubted or shaken. Mat. xxii. 29. "You err (saith "Christ to the Sadducees, who denied this doctrine) not know-"ing the scriptures, and the power of God." This is the ground and root of their error, not knowing the scriptures, and the power of God: *q. d.* did you know and believe the scriptures of God, and the power of God, you would never question this doctrine of the resurrection, which is built upon them both. The power of God convinceth all men, that know and believe it, that it *may be so*, and the scriptures of God convince all that know and believe them, that it *must be so*. As for his power, who can doubt it? At the command and fiat of God, the earth brought forth every living creature after his kind, Gen. i. 24, 25. at his command Lazarus came forth, John xi. 43. And was there not as much difficulty in either of these, as in our resurrection? By this power our souls were quickened, and raised from the death of sin and guilt, to the spiritual life of Christ, Eph. i. 19. And is it not as easy to raise a dead body as a dead soul? But what stand I arguing in so plain a case, when we are assured this mighty power is able to subdue all things to itself? Phil. iii. 21.

And then, for his promise that it shall be so, what can be plainer? See 1 Thess. iv. 15, 16. "This we say unto you by "the word of the Lord," *&c. (i. e.)* in the name or authority of the Lord, and by commission and warrant from him. He first opens his commission, shews his credentials, and then publishes the comfortable doctrine of his resurrection, and the saints pre-eminence to all others therein.

Well then, what remains in death to fright and scare a believer? Is it our parting with these bodies? Why, it is not for ever that we part with them; as sure as the power and promises of God are true, firm, and sufficient to accomplish it, we shall see and enjoy them again. This comforted Job, chap. xix. 25, 26. over all his diseases, when of all his enjoyments that once

he had, he could not say, my friends, my children, my estate; yet then he could say, my Redeemer. When he looked upon a poor wasted, withered, lothsome body of his own, and saw nothing but a skeleton, an image of death, yet then could he see it a glorious body, by viewing it believingly in this glass of the resurrection. So then all the damage we can receive by death, is but the absence of our bodies for a time; during which time, the covenant-relation betwixt God and them, holds good and firm, Mat. xxii. 32. He therefore will take care of them, and in due time restore them, with marvellous improvements and endowments, to us again, divested of all their infirmities, and cloathed with heavenly qualities and perfections, 1 Cor. xv. 43, 44. And in the mean time, the soul attains its rest, and happiness, and satisfaction in the blessed God.

Arg. 4. The consideration of what we part from, and what we go to, should make the medium, by which we pass from so much evil to so great good, lovely and desirable in our eyes, how unpleasing or bitter soever it be in itself.

No man desires physic for itself. There is no pleasure in bitter pills and lothsome potions, except what rises from the end, *viz.* the disburdening of nature, and recovery of health; and this gives it a value with the sick and pained. Under a like consideration is death desired by sick and pained souls, who find it better to die once, than groan under burdens continually.

Death certainly is the best physician, next, and under Jesus Christ, that ever was employed about them; for it cures radically and perfectly, so that the soul never relapses more into any distemper. Other medicines are but anodynes, or at best they relieve us but in part, and for a time; but this goes through the work, and perfects the cure at once. Methinks that call of Christ, which he gives his spouse in Cant. iv. 8. "(Come with "me from Lebanon: (my spouse) with me from Lebanon: "and look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and "Hermon, from the lions dens, from the mountains of leo-"pards)" scarce suits any time so well as the time of death. Then it is that we depart from the lions dens, and the mountains of leopards, places uncomfortable and unsafe. More particularly at death the saints depart,

1. From defiling corruptions		1. Perfect purity.
2. From heart sinking sorrows		2. Fulness of joy.
3. From entangling temptations	into	3. Everlasting freedom.
4. From distressing persecutions		4. Full rest.
5. From pinching wants		5. Universal supplies.
6. From distracting fears		6. Highest security.
7. From deluding shadows		7. Substantial good.

1. From defiling corruptions into perfect purity. No sin hangs about the separated, though it do about the sanctified soul. They come out of the body suitable to that character and encomium, Cant. iv. 7. "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no "spot in thee." It doth that for the saints, which all their graces and duties, all their mercies and afflictions, could never do. Faith is a great purifier, communion with God a great cleanser, sanctified afflictions a refiner's fire and fuller's soap; these have all done their parts, and been useful in their places: But none of them, nor all together, perfected this cure till death come, and then the work is done, and the cure perfected.

All weeping, all praying, all believing, all hearing, all sacraments, all the means and instruments in the world, cannot do what death will do for thee. One dying hour will do what ten thousand praying hours never did, nor could do. In this hour the design of all those hours is accomplished; as he that is dead by mortification, is, at present, freed from sin, in respect of imputation and dominion, Rom. vi. 7. so he that is justified and mortified, when dead naturally, is immediately freed from the very indwelling and existence of sin in him. We read of the washing of the robes of the saints, in Rev. vii. 14. The blood of the Lamb cleanseth them from every spot; but it doth it gradually. The last spot of guilt indeed was fetched out by one act of justification; but the last spot of filth is not fetched out till the time of their dissolution; when they are come out of the agonies of death (which the scripture calls great tribulation) then, and not till then, are they perfectly cleansed. Sin brought in death, and death carries out sin.

Oh! what a pure, lovely, shining creature, is the separated spirit of a just man? how clear is its judgment, how ordinate its will, how holy, and altogether heavenly are all its affections now! and never till now it feels itself perfectly well, and as it would be.

2. From heart-sinking sorrows, into fulness of joy. The life we now live is a groaning life, 2 Cor. v. 2. where is the Christian, that if his inside could be seen, and his heart laid naked, would not be found wounded from many hands? from the hand God, of enemies, of friends, of Satan; but especially by the hands of its own corruptions? Christ our head was stiled *a man of sorrows*, from the multitude of his sorrows; and it is the lot of all his to be in a state of sorrow in the body. "In the "world (saith he) you shall have trouble." When I consider how oft the candle of sorrow is held to the thread of life, I justly wonder how it is protracted to such a length. What friend,

what enjoyment had we ever in this world, from which no sorrow, nay, many sorrows have not sprung up to us? And if the best comforts bring forth sorrows, what do the worst things we meet with here bring forth? I suppose there are many thousands of God's people this day in the world, that have as much reason to assume the same new name, that Naomi did, and say, call me *Marah*. Look, as day and night divide all time betwixt them; so do our comforts and our sorrows, only with this difference, that our nights of sorrow, like winter nights, are long, cold and dark; and our days of comfort short, and frequently overcast.

But when we put off these bodies, we put off our mourning garments with them, and shall never sorrow any more: Thenceforth God wipes away all tears from his peoples eyes, Rev. xxi. 4. And that is not all, but they enter in into their Master's joy, even fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. Groans are turned into triumphs, and sighs, and tears, into joyful acclamations and songs of praise. Oh that we were once made throughly sensible of the advantages that come by this exchange!

3. From entangling temptations into everlasting freedom. It is this body, and the interests, and concerns of it, upon which Satan raises most of his batteries against our souls: It is our flesh that causeth our souls to sin; and whilst the foul dwells in the body, it is within Satan's reach to tempt, and defile, and trouble it. Oh what grievous things do the best souls endure, and suffer on this account!

Temptations are of two sorts; ordinary and mediate, by Satan's exciting and managing our corruptions, by presenting objects to them; or extraordinary and immediate, like fiery darts shot immediately out of hell into the soul, which puts it all into a flame and combustion: Of the former you read in James i. 14, the latter, Eph. vi. 16. and upon the account of the one and the other, the people of God are weary of their lives. Think what a grief it must be to a soul, that loves God, to feel in itself such things as militate against, and wound the name and honour of God, which is, and ought to be dearer to it than its life.

But by the door of death every gracious soul makes its escape from the tempting power of Satan: He can no more touch or affect the soul with any temptation, than we can batter the body of the sun with snow-balls: For as Satan can have no access to that place of blessedness, where the souls of the saints are; so if he could, he can find nothing in them to fasten a temptation upon. The schoolmen give this as the reason why the saints

in heaven are impeccable, because all their thoughts and affections are everlastingly fixed in, and employed about the blessed God, whose face they continually behold in glory.

4. From distressing persecutions, into full and perfect rest. As death sets us free from the power of Satan, so from the reach of all persecutors: "There the wicked cease from trou-"bling, and there the weary are at rest," as it is in Job iii. 17. The price of one Ahab, who had sold himself to work wickedness, was a flock sufficient to purchase many years trouble to all Israel, 1 Kings xviii. 17. "Wicked men are as the unquiet trou-"bled sea which cannot rest," Isa. lvii. 20. They cannot rest from troubling the saints, till they cease to be wicked or to live: When God puts out the candle of their lives, they are silent in darkness, 1 Sam. ii. 9. And when God puts out the candle of our life, we are at rest, though they rage never so much in this world. Death is the saints *quietus est*, their full and final discharge from persecuting enemies. When we are dying, we may say, as Psal. ix. 6. "O thou enemy, destructions are come "to a perpetual end."

God may put an end to these persecutions before death, and such a time, according to promise, is to be expected, "when our "officers shall be peace, and our exactors righteousness," Isa. lx. 17. but if the accomplishment of the promise be reserved for ages to come, and we must spend our days under the oppression of the wicked; yet this is our comfort, we know when we shall be far enough out of their reach.

5. From pinching wants, to universal supplies. This is the day in which the Lord abundantly satisfies the desires, and supplies the needs of all his people. There are two sorts of wants upon the people of God: *spiritual* and *temporal*.

Spiritual wants are the just complaints of all gracious souls. You read, 1 Thess. iii. 10. of that which is lacking in the faith of the saints: There are none but find many things lacking to the perfection of every grace: our knowledge of God wants clearness, and efficacy; our love to God fervor, and constancy; our faith wants strength, and stability: Darkness mixes itself with our knoweldge, deadness with our love, unbelief with the purest acts of faith. Go where you will, you shall find God's people every where complaining of their spiritual wants: one of a dark head, another of a dead heart, another of a treacherous memory. Thus they are loading one another with their complaints.

Temporal outward wants pinch hard also upon many of God's people: The greatest number of them consist of the poor of this

have had of God, and his love, in your sincere and secret addresses to him, and converses with him. What a holy forgetfulness of all things in this world hath it wrought! How insipid and tasteless hath it rendered the sweetest creature-enjoyments! What willingness to be dissolved for a more full fruition of it! God this way brings heaven nigh to your souls, out of design to overcome your reluctancies at death, through which you must pass to the enjoyment of it. And after all those sights and tastes, both of the truth and goodness of that state, shall we still reluctate, and hang back, as if we had never tasted how good the Lord is! O you may justly question, whether you ever had a real taste of Jesus Christ, if that taste do not kindle coals of fire in your bosoms, I mean, ardent longings to be with him, and to be satiated with his love.

If you have been privileged with a taste of that hidden Manna, with the sight of things invisible, with joys unspeakable, and full of glory, and yet are loath to be gone to the fountain whence all this flows; certainly you herein both cross the design of the Spirit in giving them, and cast a vile disgrace and reproach upon the blessed God, as thinking there is more bitterness in death, than there is sweetness in his presence. Yea, it argues the strength of that unbelief which still remains in your hearts, that after so many tastes and trials as you have had, you still remain doubtful and hesitating about the certainty and reality of things invisible.

O what ado hath God with his froward and peevish children! If he had only revealed the future state to us in his word, as the pure object of faith, and required us to die upon the mere credit of his promise, without such pawns, pledges, and earnests as these are; Were there not reason enough for it? But after such, and so many wonderful and amazing condescensions, wherein he doth as it were say, Soul, if yet thou doubtest, I will bring heaven to thee, thou shalt have it in thy hand, thy eyes shall see it, thy hands shall handle it, thy mouth shall taste it; How inexcusable is our reluctancy?

Argum. 6. *It should greatly fortify the people of God, against the fears of dissolution, to consider that death can neither destroy the being of their souls by annihilation, nor the hopes and expectations they have of blessedness, by disappointment and frustration,* Prov. xiv. 32. "The righteous hath hope in his death."

Though all earthly things fail at death (upon which account dying is expressed by failing, Luke xvi. 19.) yet neither the soul, nor the well-grounded hopes can fail. The anchor of a believer's hope is firm and sure, Heb. vi. 18. It will come home

in the greateſt ſtorm that can beat upon the ſoul. For, (1.) God hath foreknown and choſen them to ſalvation before the world was, 1 Pet. i. 2. "And this foundation of God ſtandeth "ſure, having this ſeal, The Lord knoweth who are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19. His decrees are as firm as mountains of braſs, Zech. vi. 1. (2.) God hath juſtified their perſons, and therein deſtroyed the power of death over them, 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 57. "O death where is thy ſting? O grave where is thy victory? "The ſting of death is ſin, the ſtrength of ſin is the law." If all the hurtful power of death lies in ſin, and all the deſtructive power of ſin riſes from the law; then neither death, nor ſin, have any power to deſtroy the believer, in whom the righteouſneſs of the law is fulfilled, Rom. viii. 4. namely, by the imputation of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt to them, in reſpect of which they are as righteous, as if in their own perſons they had perfectly obeyed all its commands, or ſuffered all its penalties. Thus death loſeth its ſting, its curſe and killing power over the ſouls of all that are in Chriſt. (3.) God hath ſanctified their natures, which ſanctification is not only a ſure evidence of their election and juſtification, 2 Theſſ. i. 5, 6. Rom. viii. 1. but a ſure pledge of their glorification alſo, 2 Cor. v. 4, 5. Yea, (4.) He hath made a ſure, and an everlaſting covenant with believers; and among other gracious privileges thereby conferred upon them, death is found in the inventory, 1 Cor. xiii. 21. *Death is yours;* to die is gain to them: It deſtroys their enemies, and the diſtance that is betwixt Chriſt and them. (5.) He hath ſealed them to his glory by the holy Spirit, Eph. iv. 30. So that their hopes are too firmly built to be deſtroyed by death; and if it cannot deſtroy their ſouls, nor overthrow their hopes, they need not fear all that it can do beſides.

Argum. 7. *It may greatly encourage and embolden the people of God to die, conſidering that though at death they take the laſt ſight and view of all that is dear to them on earth; yet then they are admitted to the firſt immediate ſight and bleſſed viſion of God, which will be their happineſs to all eternity.*

When Hezekiah was upon his ſuppoſed death-bed, he complained, Iſa. xxxviii. 11. "I ſhall ſee man no more, with the "inhabitants of the world." We ſhall ſee thenceforth theſe corporeal people no more. We ſhall ſee our habitations and dwelling-places no more, Job vii. 9. 10, 11. We ſhall ſee our children and dear relations no more. Job xiv. 21. His ſons come "to honour, and he knoweth it not." Theſe things make death terrible to men; but that which cures all this trouble is, that

we ſhall neither need, nor deſire them, being thenceforth admit-to the beatifical viſion of the bleſſed God himſelf.

It is the expectation and hope of this, which comforteth the ſouls of the righteous here, Pſal. xvii. 15. "When I awake, I "ſhall behold thy face in righteouſneſs." Thoſe weak and dim repreſentations made by faith, at a diſtance, are the very joy and rejoicing of a believer's ſoul now, 1 Pet. i. 7, 8. but how ſweet and tranſporting ſoever theſe viſions of faith be, they are not worthy to be named in compariſon with the immediate and beatifical viſion, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. This is the very ſum of a believer's bleſſedneſs: And what it is we cannot comprehend in this imperfect ſtate; only, in general, we may gather theſe concluſions about it, from the account given of it in the ſcriptures.

1. That it will not be ſuch a ſight of God as we now have by the mediation of faith, but a direct, immediate, and intuitive viſion of God; (* 1 John iii. 2. "We ſhall ſee him as he is." 1 Cor. xiii. 12. "Then face to face,") which far tranſcends the viſion of faith, in clearneſs and in comfort. This ſeems to import no leſs than the very ſight of the divine Eſſence, that which Moſes deſired on earth to ſee, but could not, Exod. xxxiii. 20. nor can be ſeen by any man dwelling in a body, 1 Tim. vi. 16. nor by unbodied ſouls comprehenſively: ſo God only ſees himſelf. Our eyes ſee the ſun which they cannot comprehend, yet truly apprehend. God will then be known in his eſſence, and in the glory of all his attributes. The ſight of the attributes of God gives the occaſion and matter of thoſe aſcriptions of praiſe and glory to him, which is the proper employment of glorified ſouls, Rev. iv. 11. and ver. 12, 13. which is the proper employment of angels, Iſa. vi. 3. Oh how different is this from what we now have through faith, duties, and ordinances! See the difference betwixt knowledge by reports, and immediate ſight, in that example of the *queen of the ſouth*, 1 Kings x. 10. the former only excited her deſires, the latter tranſported and overcame her very ſoul.

Some may think ſuch a viſion of God to exceed the abilities of nature, and capacities of any creature. But as a learned † man rightly obſerves, if the *Divine Nature* be capable of union with a creature, as it is evident in the perſon of Chriſt, it is alſo

* The light of glory is an actual illumination, *i. e.* a ſupernatural influx of God, elevating the underſtanding to a ſight of the divine eſſence. *Smiſſing Tracter.* 2. *Dif.* 6. *N.* 33.

† Norton's Orthodox, Evang. p. 327.

capable of being the object of vision to the creature. Beside, we must know the light of glory hath the same respect to this blessed vision, that assisting grace hath to the acts of faith and obedience performed here on earth. It is a comforting, soul-strengthening light, not to dazzle and overpower, but to comfort, strengthen, and clear the eye of the creature's understanding. Rev. ii. 28. "I will give him the morning-star," *lumen confortans;* and Isa. xxxvi. 9. "In thy light we shall see light."

2. It will be a satisfying sight, Psal. xvii. 15. so perfectly quieting, and giving rest to the soul in all its powers, that they neither can proceed, nor desire to proceed any farther. The understanding can know no more, the will can will no more; the affections of joy, delight, and love are at full rest and quiet in their proper centre. For all good is in the chiefest good eminently; as all the light of the candles in the world is in the sun, and all the rivers in the world in the sea. That which makes the understanding, will, and affections move farther, as being restless, and unsatisfied in all discoveries and enjoyments here, is the limited and imperfect nature of things we now converse with; as if you bring a great ship that draws much water, into a narrow, and shallow river, she can neither sail nor swim, but is presently aground: But let that ship have sea-room enough, then she can turn and sail before the wind, because there is depth of water, and room enough. So it is here; all that delighted, but could never satisfy you in the creature, is eminently in God; and what was imperfectly in them, is perfectly to be enjoyed in him, 1 Cor. xv. 28. "God shall be all "in all;" the comforts you had here were but drop by drop, inflaming, not satisfying the appetite of the soul: But then "the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed "them, and lead them unto fountains of living water," Rev. vii. 17. The object fills the faculties.

3. It will be an appropriating vision of God; you shall see him as your own God, and proper portion; else it could never be a satisfying vision, Job xix. 27. "Whom I shall see for my-"self!" Not look on him as another's God, but as my God and portion for ever. Balaam saw Christ by a spirit of prophecy; but he had no comfort, because no interest in him, Numb. xxiv. 17. The wicked shall see him, but without joy, yea, with weeping eyes, and gnashing of teeth, because they cannot see him as their Lord, Luke xiii. 28. 'Tis but a poor comfort to starving beggars to stand quivering and famishing in the streets in a cold dark night, and see the lights in the bridegroom's

houſe, the noble diſhes ſerved in, and to hear the muſic and mirth of the gueſts that feaſt within. Here it will be as clear that he is *our God*, as that he is *God*. Aſſurance is that which many ſouls have deſired, prayed, and panted for, but cannot attain. There be many rubs and ſtumbling-blocks in the way to that ſweet enjoyment; but here we find what we have been ſo long ſeeking: There be no doubts, ſcruples, objections, puzzling caſes, to exerciſe your own, or others thoughts. But as theſe did ariſe from one of theſe grounds, *viz.* the working of corruption, the efficacy of temptation, or divine withdrawments, and the hidings of God's face: So all theſe being removed perfectly and for ever in that ſtate, the heavens muſt needs be clear, and not a cloud of doubt or fear to be ſeen for ever.

4. It will be a deeply affecting ſight; your eyes will now ſo affect your hearts, as they were never affected before. The firſt view of God will ſnatch away your hearts to him, as a greater flame doth the leſs. Love will not now diſtil from the heart, as waters from a cold ſtill, but guſh out as from a ſluice or floodgate pulled up. The ſoul will not move after God ſo deadly and ſlowly as it doth now, but be as the chariots of Aminadab, Cant. vi. 12. We may ſay of the frames of our hearts there, compared with what they are here, as it is ſaid, Deut. xii. 8, 9. "You ſhall not love, *or delight in*, God, as you "do this day." If the perfection of that ſtate would admit ſhame or ſorrow, how ſhould we bluſh and mourn in heaven, to think how cold our love, and how low our delights in God were on earth! 1 John iv. 16. "God is love; and he that "dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God." Look, as iron put into the fire becomes all fiery, ſo the ſoul dwelling in the God of love, becomes all love, all delight, all joy. Oh what tranſports muſt that ſoul feel, that abides under the line of love! feels the perpendicular beams of electing, creating, redeeming, preſerving love, beating powerfully upon it, and melting it into love! See ſome of their tranſports, Rev. v. 13, 14.

5. It will be an *everlaſting viſion of God*, 1 Theſſ. v. 17. "So ſhall we be ever with the Lord," [ever with the Lord.] Who can find words to open the deep ſenſe of theſe few words! *Vacabimus et videbimus, videbimus et amabimus, amabimus et laudabimus in ſine ſine ſine*, ſaith bleſſed Auſtin. This is the everlaſting ſabbath, which hath no night, Rev. xxii. 4, 5. The eternal happineſs purchaſed for the ſaints by the invaluable blood of Chriſt. If one hour's enjoyment of God, in the way

of faith, be ſo ſweet, and no price can be put upon it, nothing on earth taken in exchange for it; what muſt a whole eternity, in the immediate and full viſions of that bleſſed face in heaven, be!

Well then, if ſuch ſights as theſe, immediately ſucceed the ſight you have on earth, either by ſenſe of things natural, or by reaſon of things intellectual, or by faith of things ſpiritual, who that believes the truth, and expects the fulfilling of ſuch promiſes as theſe, would not be willing to have his eyes cloſed by death, as ſoon as God ſhall pleaſe? I have read of a holy man that had ſweet communion with God in prayer, who in the cloſe of his duty cried out, *claudimini, oculi mei, claudimini*, &c. *Be ſhut, O my eyes, be ſhut; you ſhall never ſee any thing on earth like that I have now ſeen.* Ah! little do the friends of dead believers think what viſions of God, what raviſhing ſights of Chriſt, the ſouls of their friends have, when they are cloſing their eyes with tears.

Argum. 8. *The conſideration of the evil days that are to come, ſhould make the people of God willing to accept of an hiding place in the grave, as a ſpecial favour from God.*

It is accounted an act of favour by God, Iſa. lvii. 1, 2. to be taken away from the *evil to come*. There are two kinds of evils to come, the evil of *ſin*, and the evil of *ſufferings*. Sins to come are terrible to gracious hearts, when temptations ſhall be at their height, and ſtrength. Oh, what warping and ſhrinking, what diſſembling, yea, downright denying the known truths and ways of God, may you ſee every-where? Many conſciences will then be wounded and waſted? Many ſcandals and rocks of offence will be rolled into the way of godlineſs: Chriſt will be expoſed, and put to open ſhame. Should we only be ſpectators of ſuch tragedies as theſe, it were enough to overwhelm a gracious and tender heart. But what upright heart is there without fears and jealouſies of being brought under the guilt of theſe evils in itſelf, as well as the ſhame and grief for them in others? Oh! it were a thouſand times better for you to die in the purity and integrity of your conſciences, than to protract a miſerable life without them. Oh! think what a world it is you are like to leave behind you, in reſpect of that to come!

And as there are many evils of ſin to come, ſo there are many evils of ſufferings coming on: "The days of viſitation are coming on, the days of recompence are come, and Iſrael ſhall "know it," Hoſ. ix. 7. All the ſufferings you have yet met with, have been in books and hiſtories: You never ſaw the martyrdom of the ſaints, but in the pictures and ſtories; but you will find it quite another thing to be the *ſubjects* of theſe cruelties, than

to be the mere *readers* or *relators* of them. 'Tis one thing to ſee the painted lion on a ſign-poſt, and another to meet the living lion roaring upon you. Ah! little do we imagine how the hearts of men are convulſed, what fears, what faintings invade their ſpirits, when they are to meet the King of terrors, in the frightful formalities of a violent death.

The conſideration of theſe things will diſcover to you the reaſon of that ſtrange wiſh of Job, chap. xiv. 13. "Oh that thou "wouldſt hide me in the grave; that thou wouldſt keep me in "ſecret till thy wrath be paſt!" And it deſerves a ſerious thought, that when the holy Ghoſt had, in Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11, 12. deſcribed the miſerable plight of thoſe poor ſouls, who being overcome by their own fears and the love of this world, ſhould plunge themſelves firſt into a deep guilt, by compliance with Antichriſt, and receiving his mark; then into a hell upon earth, the remorſe and horror of their own conſciences, which gives them no reſt, day nor night; he immediately ſubjoins, ver. 13. "Bleſſed are the "dead that die in the Lord; yea, from henceforth, ſaith the "Spirit," *&c.* Oh! it is a ſpecial bleſſing and favour to be hid out of the way *of thoſe temptations and torments, in a ſeaſonable and quiet grave.*

Argum. 9. *Your fixed averſation and unwillingneſs to die, will provoke God to imbitter your lives with much more afflictions than you have yet felt, or would feel, if your hearts were more mortified and weaned in this point.*

You cannot think of your own deaths with pleaſure, no nor yet with patience. Well, take heed, leſt this draw down ſuch trouble upon you, as ſhall make you at laſt to ſay with Job, chap. x. 1. "My ſoul is weary of my life;" an expreſſion much like that, 2 Sam. i. 9. "Anguiſh is come upon me, becauſe my life "is whole in me. My ſoul is hardened, or become cruel againſt my life, as the Chaldee renders it.

There is a twofold wearineſs of life; one from an excellency of ſpirit, a noble principle, the ardent love of Jeſus Chriſt, Phil. i. 23. "I deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt." Another from the mere preſſures, of affliction and anguiſh of ſpirit, under heavy and ſucceſſive ſtrokes from the hand of God and men. Is it not more excellent and deſirable to groan for death under a preſſure of love to Chriſt, than of affliction from Chriſt?

I am convinced that very many of our afflictions come upon this ſcore and account, to make us willing to die.

Is it not ſad that God is forced to bring death upon all our comfortable and deſirable things in this world, before he can gain our conſents to be gone? Why will you put God upon

such work as this? Why cannot he have your hearts at a cheaper rate? If you could die, many of your comforts, for ought I know, might live. Had Joab come to Absalom when he sent for him the first or second time, Absalom had never set his field of barley on fire, 2 Sam. xiv. 30. And were you more obedient to the will of God in this manner, it is likely he would not consume your health, and estates, and relations, with such heavy strokes, as he hath done, and will yet farther do except your wills be more compliant.

Alas! to cut off your comforts one after another, and make you live a groaning life, the Lord hath no pleasure in it; but he had rather you should lose these things, than that he should lose your hearts on earth, or company in heaven: *Impatiens aegrotus crudelem facit medicum.*

Argum. 10. *The decree of death cannot be reversed, nor is there any other ordinary passage for the soul into glory, but through the gates of death.* Heb. ix. 27 "It is appointed for "all men once to die, but after that the judgment."

There is but one way to pass out of the obscure suffocating life in the womb, into the more free and nobler life in the world, *viz.* through the agonies of birth: and there is ordinarily but one way to pass from this sinning, groaning life we live in this world, to the enjoyment of God and the glory above, *viz.* through the agonies of death. You must cast off this mean, this vile body, before you can be happy. Heaven cannot come down to you, you cannot see God and live, Exod. xxxiii. 20. It would certainly confound and break you to pieces, like an earthen pitcher, should God but ray forth his glory upon you in the state you now are; and it is sure you cannot expect the extraordinary favour of such a translation as Enoch had, Heb. xi. 5. or as those believers shall have, that shall be found alive at Christ's coming, 1 Thess. iv. 17. You must go the common road that all the saints go; but tho' you cannot avoid, you must sweeten it. God will not reverse his decree, but you may, and ought to arm yourselves against the fears of it. Ahasuerus would not recal the proclamation he had emitted against the Jews, but he gave them full liberty to take up arms to defend themselves against their enemies. It is much so here, the sentence cannot be revoked; but yet God gives you leave, yea, he commands you to arm yourselves against death, and defy it, and trample it under the feet of faith.

Arg. 11. *When you find your hearts reluctate at the thoughts of leaving the body, and the comforts of this world, then consider*

how willingly and chearfully Jesus Christ left heaven, and the Bosom of his Father, to come down to this world for your sakes, Prov. viii. 30, 31, Psal. xl. 7. *Lo, I come,* &c.

O compare the frames of your hearts with his, in this point, and shame yourselves out of so unbecoming a temper of spirit.

(1.) He left heaven, and all the delights and glory of it, to come down to this world to be abased and humbled to the lowest; you leave this world of sin and misery to ascend to heaven, to be exalted to the highest. He came hither to be impoverished, you go thither to be enriched, 2 Cor. viii. 9. yet he came willingly, and we go grudgingly.

(2.) He came from heaven to earth, to be made sin for us, 2 Cor. v. 21. we go from earth to heaven, to be fully and everlastingly delivered from sin; yet he came more willingly to bear our sins, than we go to be delivered from them.

(3.) He came to take a body of flesh, to suffer and die in, Heb. ii. 14. you leave your bodies that you may never suffer in, or by them any more.

(4.) As his incarnation was a deep abasement, so his death was the most bitter death that ever was tasted by any, from the beginning, or ever shall be to the end of the world; and yet how obediently doth he submit to both at the Father's call, Luke xii. 50. "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how "am I straitned till it be accomplished!" Ah Christian, your death cannot have the ten thousandth part of that bitterness in it that Christ's had. I remember one of the martyrs being asked, why his heart was so light at death? returned this answer, because Christ's heart was so heavy at his death. O there is a vast difference betwixt the one and the other; the wrath of God, and curse of the law were in his death, Gal. iii. 13. but there is neither wrath nor curse in their death who die in the Lord, Rom. viii. 1.

God forsook him when he hanged upon the tree in the agonies of death, Mat. xxvii. 46. "My God, my God, why hast "thou forsaken me?" But you shall not be forsaken; He will make all your bed in sickness, Psal. xli. 3. He will never leave you nor forsake you, Heb. xiii. 5.

Yet he regretted not, but went as a sheep or lamb, Isa. liii. 7. O reason yourselves out of this reluctancy at death, by this great example and pattern of obedience.

Arg. 12. Lastly, *Let no Christian be affrighted at death, considering that the death of Christ is the death of death, and hath utterly disarmed it of all its destructive power.*

If you tremble when you look upon death, yet you cannot but triumph when you look believingly upon Christ.

For, (1.) Christ died (O believer) for thy sins, Rom. iv. 25. his death was an expiatory sacrifice for all thy guilt, Gal. iii. 13. so that thou shalt not die in thy sins: The pangs of death may, and must be on thy outward man, but the guilt of sin, and the condemnation of God shall not be upon thy inner man.

(2.) The death of Christ, in thy room, hath utterly destroyed the power of death, which once was in the hand of Satan, Heb. ii. 24. Col. ii. 14, 15. his power was not authoritative, but executive: not as the power of a king, but of a sheriff; which is none at all when a pardon is produced.

(3.) Christ hath assured us, that his victory over death shall be complete in our persons. It is already a complete personal victory, in respect of himself, Rom. vi. 9. he dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him. It's an incomplete victory already as to our persons. It can dissolve the union of our souls and bodies, but the union betwixt Christ and our souls it can never dissolve, Rom. viii. 38, 39. and as for the power it still retains over our dust, that also shall be destroyed at the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26, compared with ver. 54, 55, 56, 57. so that there is no cause for any soul in Christ to tremble at the thought of a separation from the body, but rather to embrace it as a privilege; *death is ours.*

O that these arguments might prevail! O that they might at last win the consent of our hearts to go along with death, which is the messenger sent by God to bring us home to our Father's house!

But I doubt, when all is said, we are where we were; all this suffices not to overcome the regrets and reluctancies of nature; still the matter sticks in our minds, and we cannot conquer our disinclined wills in this matter. What is the matter? Where lie the rubs and hindrances? O that God would remove them at last!

Objection 1. *This is a common plea with many, I am not ready and fit to die: were I ready, I should be willing to be gone.*

Solution. (1.) How long soever you live in the body, there will be somewhat still out of order, something still to do; for you must be in a state of imperfection while you remain here, and according to this plea, you will never be willing to die. (2.) Your willingness to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, is one special part of your fitness for death: and till you attain it in some good measure, you are not so fit to die as you should be. (3.) If you be in Christ, you have a fundamental fitness

for death, though you may want some circumstantial preparatives. And as to all that is wanting in your sanctification or obedience now, it will be compleated in a moment upon your dissolution.

Object. 2. *Others plead, the desire they have to live, is in order to God's farther service by them in this world. Oh, say they, it was David's happiness to die, when he had served his generation according to the will of God;* Acts xiii. 36. *If we had done so too, we should say with Simeon,* "Now lettest "thou thy servant depart in peace."

Sol. (1.) God needs not your hands to carry on his service in the world: he can do it by other hands when you are gone. Many of greater gifts and graces than you, are daily laid in the grave, to teach you, God needs no man's help to carry on his work.

(2.) If the service of God be so dear to you, there is higher and more excellent service for you in heaven, than any you ever were, or can be employed in here on earth. Oh! why do not you long to be amidst the company of angels and spirits made perfect in the temple-service in heaven?

Obj. 3. *O but my relations in the world lie near my heart, what will become of them when I am gone?*

Sol. (1.) It is pity they should lie nearer your heart than Jesus Christ: if they do, you have little reason to desire death indeed.

(2.) Who took care of you, when death snatched your dear relations from you, who possibly felt the same workings of heart that you now do? Did you not experience the truth of that word, Psal. xxvii. 10. "When father and mother forsake me, then the "Lord taketh me up?" And if you be in the covenant, God hath prevented this plea with his promise, Jer. xlix. 11. "Leave "thy fatherless children to me, I will keep them alive; and let "their widows trust in me."

Obj. 4. *But I desire to live to see the felicity of* Zion *before I go hence, and the answer of the many prayers I have sown for it; I am loath to leave the people of God in so sad a condition.*

Sol. The publicness of thy spirit, and love to Zion, is doubtless pleasing to God; but it is better for you to be in heaven one day, than to live over again all the days you have lived on earth in the best times that ever the church of God enjoyed in this world: the promises shall be accomplished, tho' you may not live to see their accomplishment; die you in the faith of it, as Joseph did; Gen. l. 24

But, alas! the matter doth not stick here: this is not the

main hindrance. I will tell you where I think it lies: (1.) In the hesitancy and staggering of our faith about the certainty and reality of things invisible. (2.) In some special guilt upon the conscience, which discourages us. (3.) In a negligent and careless course of life, which is not ordinarily blessed with much evidence or comfort. (4.) In the deep engagements of our hearts to earthly things: they could not be so cold to Christ, if they were not over-heated with other things. Till these distempers be cured, no arguments can prosper that are spent to this end. The Lord dissolve all those ties betwixt us and this world, which hinder our consent and willingness to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better.

And now we have had a glance and glimmering light, a faint umbrage of the state of the separated souls of the just in heaven: it remains that I shew you somewhat of the state and case of the damned souls in hell. A dreadful representation it is; but it is necessary we hear of hell, that we may not feel it.

* *

1 PET. iii. 19. *By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.*

IN the former discourse we have had a just view of heaven, and of the spirits of just men made perfect, the inhabitants of that blessed region of light and glory.

In this scripture we have the contrary glass, representing the unspeakable misery of those souls or spirits which are separated by death from their bodies for a time, and by sin from God for ever; arrested by the law, and secured in the prison of hell, unto the judgment of the great day.

A sermon of hell may keep some souls out of hell, and a sermon of heaven may be the means to help others to heaven: the desire of my heart is, that the conversations of all those who shall read these discourses of heaven and hell, might look more like a diligent flight from the one, and pursuit of the other.

The scope of the context is a persuasive to patience, upon a prospect of manifold tribulations coming upon the Christian churches, strongly enforced by Christ's example, who both in his own person, v. 18. and by his spirit in his servants, v. 19. exercised wonderful patience and long-suffering as a pattern to his people.

This 19 verse gives us an account of his long-suffering towards that disobedient and immorigerous generation of sinners,

on whom he waited an hundred and twenty years in the ministry of Noah.

There are difficulties in the text. *Estius reckons on less than ten expositions of it, and saith, "It is a very difficult scripture in "the judgment of almost all interpreters;" but yet I must say, those difficulties are rather brought to it, than found in it. It is a text which hath been rackt and tortured by Popish expositors, to make it speak Christ's local descent into hell, and to confess their doctrine of *purgatory*; things which it knew not.

But, if we will take its genuine sense, it only relates the sin and misery of those contumacious persons, on whom the spirit of God waited so long in the ministry of Noah; giving an account of,

1. Their sin on earth.
2. Their punishment in hell.

1. Their sin on earth, which is both specified and aggravated. (1.) Specified; namely their disobedience. They were sometimes disobedient and unpersuadable; neither precepts nor examples could bring them to repentance. (2.) This their disobedience is aggravated by the expence of God's patience upon them for the space of an hundred and twenty years, not only forbearing them so long, but striving with them, as Moses expresseth it; or waiting on them, as the apostle, here: but all to no purpose; they were obstinate, stubborn, and unpersuadable to the very last.

2. Behold, therefore, in the next place, the dreadful, but most just, and equal punishment of these sinners in hell; they are called, *spirits in prison, i. e.* the souls now in hell †.

At that time when Peter wrote of them, they were not entire men, but *spirits*, in the proper sense, *i. e.* separated souls, bodiless, and lonely souls: whilst in the body, it is properly a soul; but when separated, a spirit according to scripture-language, and the strict notion of such a being.

These spirits, or souls, in the state of separation, are said to be in a *prison*, that is, in hell, as the word elsewhere notes, Rev. xx. 7. and Jude, ver. 6. Heaven and hell are the only receptacles of departed, or separated souls.

Thus you have, in a few words, the natural, and genuine sense of the place, and it is but wasting time to repeat, and refel the many false, and forced interpretations of this text, which corrupt minds, and mercenary pens, have perplexed, and darkened it.

* Psal. xxxi. 6. Eccl. xii. 7. Acts vii. 59.

† *Locus hic omnium paene interpretum judicio difficillimus.* Estius.

withal: That which I level at, is compriſed in this plain propoſition.

Doct. *That the ſouls or ſpirits of all men who die in a ſtate of unbelief and diſobedience, are immediately committed to the priſon of hell, there to ſuffer the wrath of God due to their ſins.*

Hell is ſhadowed forth to us, in ſcripture, by divers metaphors; "for we cannot conceive ſpiritual things, unleſs they are ſo "cloathed and ſhadowed out unto us †." Auguſtine gives this reaſon for the frequent uſe of metaphors and allegories, in ſcripture, becauſe they are ſo much proportioned to our ſenſes, with which our ſenſes have contracted an intimacy and familiarity; and therefore God, to accomodate his truth to our capacities, doth as it were, this way embody it in earthly expreſſions, according to that celebrated obſervation of the Cabbaliſts, *Lumen ſupremum nunquam deſcendit ſine indumento:* the pure, and ſupreme light never deſcends to us without a garment or covering. In the Old Teſtament, the place and ſtate of damned ſouls, is ſet forth by metaphors taken from the moſt remarkable places, and exemplary acts of vengeance upon ſinners in this world; as the overthrow of the giants by the flood, thoſe prodigious ſinners that fought againſt heaven, and were ſwept by the flood, into the place of torments. To this Solomon is conceived to allude, in Prov. xxi. 16. "The man that wanders out of the way of un- "derſtanding, ſhall remain in the congregation of the dead;" in the Hebrew it is, he ſhall remain with the *Rephaims*, or giants. Theſe giants were the men that more eſpecially provoked God to bring the flood upon the world; they are alſo noted as the firſt inhabitants of hell, therefore from them the place of torment takes its name, and the damned are ſaid to remain in the place of giants.

Hell called place of giants and why.

Sometimes hell is called Tophet, Iſa. xxx. 33. This Tophet was in the valley of Hinnon, and was famous for divers things. There the children of Iſrael cauſed their children to paſs through the fire to Moloch, or ſacrificed to the devil, drowning their horrible ſhrieks and ejaculations with the noiſe of drums.

Hell called Tophet, and why.

In this valley alſo was the memorable ſlaughter of eighteen hundred thouſand of the Aſſyrian camp, by an angel, in one night.

There, alſo, the Babylonians murdered the people of Jeruſa-

† *Spiritualia capere non poſſumus, niſi adumbrata.*

lem, at the taking of the city, Jer. vii. 31, 32. So that Tophet was a mere shambles, the public chopping-block, on which the limbs of both young and old were quartered out, by thousands. It was filled with dead bodies, till there was no place for burial. By all which it appears, that no spot of ground in the world was so famous for the fires kindled in it to destroy men, for the doleful cries that ecchoed from it, or the innumerable multitudes that perished in it; for which reason it is made the emblem of hell. Sometimes it is called a "lake of fire burning with brimstone," Rev. xix. 20. denoting the most exquisite torment, by an intense and durable flame.

Hell a lake of fire.

And in the text, it is called a *prison*, where the spirits of ungodly men are both detained and punished. This notion of a prison gives us a lively representation of the miserable state of damned souls, and that especially in the following particulars.

A prison.

First, Prisoners are arrested, and seized by authority of law; it is the law which sends them thither, and keeps them there; the mittimus of a justice is but the instrument of the law, whereby they are deprived of liberty, and taken into custody. The law of God, which sinners have both violated and despised, at death takes hold of them, and arrests them. It is the law which claps up their spirits in prison, and in the name and authority of the great and terrible God, commits them to hell. All that are out of Christ, are under the curse and damning sentence of the law, which now comes to be executed on them, Gal. iii. 10.

Secondly, Prisoners are carried, or haled to prison, by force and constraint; natural force backs legal authority: the law is executed by rough and resolute bailiffs, who compel them to go, though never so much against their will; this also is the case of the wicked at death: Satan is God's bailiff, to hurry away the law-condemned souls to the infernal prison. The devil hath the power of death, Heb. ii. 14. as the executioner hath of the body of a condemned man.

Thirdly, Prisoners are chained and bolted in prison, to prevent their escape; so are damned spirits secured by the power of God, and chained by their own guilty and trembling consciences, in hell, unto the time of judgment, and the fulness of misery; not that they have no torment in the mean time: alas! were there no more but that fearful expectation of wrath and fiery indignation, spoken of by the apostle, Heb. x. 27. it were an inexpressible torment; but there is a farther degree of tor-

spirit to be awarded them at the judgment of the great day, to which they are therefore kept, as in chains and prisons.

Fourthly, Prisons are dark and noisome places, not built for pleasure, as other houses are, but for punishment; so is hell. Jude, ver. 6. "Reserved in everlasting chains under darkness," as he there describes the place of torments, yea, *utter darkness*, Matth. viii. 12. extreme or perfect darkness. Philosophers tell us of the darkness of this world, *Non datur purae tenebrae*, that there is no pure or perfect darkness here, without some mixture of light; but there is not a glade of light, not a spark of hope or comfort shining into that prison.

Fifthly, Mournful sighs and groans are heard in prisons: Psal. xcvii. 11. Let the "sighing of the prisoners come before thee," saith the psalmist. But deeper sighs and emphatical groans are heard in hell, "There shall be weeping and wailing, and "gnashing of teeth," Matth. viii. 12. Those that could not groan under the sense of sin on earth, shall howl under anguish and desperation in hell.

Sixthly, There is a time when prisoners are brought out of the prison to be judged, and then return in a worse condition than before, to the place from whence they came. God also hath appointed a day for the solemn condemnation of those spirits in prison. The scriptures call it "the judgment of the "great day," Jude ver. 6. from the great business that is to be done therein, and the great and solemn assembly that shall then appear before God.

But I will insist no longer upon the display of the metaphor; my business is to give you a representation of the state and condition of damned souls in hell, and to assist your conceptions of them, and of their state.

It is a dreadful sight I am to give you this day; but how much better is it to see, than to feel that wrath? The treasures thereof shall shortly be broken up, and poured forth upon the spirits of men.

You had in the former discourse, a faint umbrage of the spirits of just men in glory; in this you will have an imperfect representation of the spirits of wicked men in hell: and look, as the former cannot be adequate and perfect, because that happiness surpasseth our knowledge; so neither can this be so, because the misery of the damned passeth our fear.

The case and state of a damned spirit will be best opened in these following propositions.

Proposition 1. *That the guilt of all sin gathers to, and settles*

in the conscience of every Christless sinner, and makes up a vast treasure of guilt in the course of his life in this world.

The high and awful power of conscience belonging to the understanding faculty in the soul of man, was spoken to before, as to its general nature, and that conscience certainly accompanies it, and is inseparable from it, was there shewed; I am here to consider it as the seat or centre of guilt, in all unregenerate and lost souls. For look, as the tides wash up, and leave the slime and filth upon the shore, even so all the corruption and sin that is in the other faculties of the soul, settle upon the conscience. "Their mind and conscience (saith the apostle) is defiled," Tit. i. 15. it is, as it were, the sink of a sinner's soul, into which all filth runs, and guilt settles.

The conscience of every believer is purged from its filthiness by the blood of Christ, Heb. ix. 14. his blood and his spirit purify it, and pacify it, whereby it becomes the region of light and peace; but all the guilt which hath been long contracting, through the life of an unbeliever, fixes itself deep and fast in his conscience; "It is written upon the tables of their hearts, as "with a pen of iron," Jer. xvii. 1. *i. e.* guilt is as a mark or character, fashioned or engraven in the very substance of the soul, as letters are cut into glass with a diamond.

Conscience is not only the principle *engagee*, obliged unto God as a judge, but the principal director and guide of the soul, in its courses and actions, and consequently, the guilt of all sin falls upon it, and rests in it. The soul is both the spring and fountain of all actions, that go outward from man, and the term or receptacle of all actions inward; but in both sorts of actions, going outward, and coming inward, conscience is the chief counsellor, guide, and director in all, and so the guilt which is contracted either way, must be upon its head. It is the bridle of the soul, to restrain it from sin; the eye of the soul, to direct its course; and therefore is principally chargeable with all the evils of life. Bodily members are but instruments, and the will itself, as high and noble a faculty or power as it is, moveth not, until the judgment cometh to a conclusion, and the debate be ended in the mind.

Now, in the whole course and compass of a sinner's life in this world, what treasures of guilt must needs be lodged in his conscience? What a magazine of sin and filth must be laid up there? It is said of a wicked man, Job xx. 11. "His bones are "full of the sins of his youth;" meaning his spirit, mind, or conscience, is as full of sin, as bones are of marrow; yea, the very sins of his youth are enough to fill them: and Rom. ii. 5.

they are said "to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath," which is only done by treasuring up guilt? for wrath and guilt are treasured up together in proportion to each other. Every day of his life vast sums have been cast into this treasury, and the patience of God waiteth till it be full, before he calls the sinner to an account and reckoning, Gen. xv. 16.

Prop. 2. *All the sin and guilt, contracted upon the souls and consciences of impenitent men in this world, accompanies and follows their departed souls to judgment, and there brings them under the dreadful condemnation of the great and terrible God, which cuts off all their hopes and comforts for ever.*

"If you believe not that I am he, you shall die in your sins," John viii. 24. And Job xx. 11. "His bones are full of the sins "of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust." No proposition lies clearer in scripture, or should ly with greater weight on the hearts of sinners: nothing but pardon can remove guilt; but without faith and repentance there never was, nor shall be a pardon, Acts x. 43. Rom. iii. 24, 25. Luke xxiv. 46, 47. Look, as the graces of believers, so the sins of unbelievers follow the soul whithersoever it goes: All their sins who die out of Christ, cry to them when they go hence, *We are thy works, and we will follow thee.* The acts of sin are transient, but the guilt and effects of it are permanent; and it is evident by this, that in the great day, their consciences, which are the books of records, wherein all their sins are registred, will be opened, and they shall be judged by them, and out of them, Rev. xx. 12.

Now, before that general judgment, every soul comes to its particular judgment, and that immediately after death: of this I apprehend the apostle to speak in Heb. ix. 27. "It is appointed "for all men once to die, but after that the judgment." The soul is presently stated by this judgment in its everlasting and fixed condition. The soul of a wicked man appearing before God, in all its sin and guilt, and by him sentenced, immediately it gives up all its hope, Prov. xi. 7. "When a wicked man "dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of the unjust "man perisheth." His strong hope * perisheth, as some read it, *i. e.* his strong delusion: for, alas, he took his own shadow for a bridge over the great waters, and is unexpectedly plunged into the gulph of eternal misery, as Matth. vii. 22.

This perishing, or cutting off of hope, is that which is called

* *Etiam spes valentissima, i. e.* Even the strongest hope.

in scripture *the death of the soul*, for so long the soul will live, as it hath any hope. The deferring of hope makes it sick, but the final cutting off of hope strikes it quite dead, *i. e.* dead as to all joy, comfort, or expectation of any for ever, which is that death which an immortal soul is capable to suffer; *The righteous hath hope in his death*; but every unregenerate man in the world breathes out his last hope in a few moments after his last breath, which strikes terror into the very centre of the soul, and is a death-wound to it.

Prop. 3 *The souls of the damned are exceeding large and capacious subjects of wrath and torment; and in their separate state their capacity is greatly enlarged, both by laying asleep all those affections whose exercise is relieving, and throughly awakening all those passions which are tormenting.*

The soul of man being by nature a spirit, an intelligent spirit, and, in its substantial faculties, assimilated to God, whose image it bears; it must, for that reason, be exquisitely sensible of all the impressions and touches of the wrath of God upon it. The spirit of man is a most tender, sensible, and apprehensive creature; the eye of the body is not so sensible of a touch, a nerve of the body is not so sensible when pricked, as the spirit of man is of the least touch of God's indignation upon it. "A "wounded spirit who can bear?" Prov. xviii. 14. Other external wounds upon the body, inflicted either by man or God, are tolerable; but that which immediately touches the spirit of man, is insufferable: who can bear or endure it?

And as the spirit of man hath the most delicate and exquisite sense of misery; so it hath a vast capacity to receive, and let in the fulness of anguish and misery into it: it is a large vessel, called, Rom. ix. 22. "A vessel of wrath fitted to destruction." The large capacity of the soul is seen in this, that it is not in the power of all the creatures in the world to satisfy and fill it: it can drink up, as one speaks, all the rivers of created good, and its thirst not quenched by such a draught; but after all, it cries, Give, give. Nothing but an infinite God can quiet and satisfy its appetite and raging thirst.

And as it is capable and receptive of more good than is found in all the creatures, so it is capable of more misery and anguish than all the creatures can inflict upon it. Let all the elements, of men on earth, yea, all the devils and damned in hell, conspire and unite in a design to torment man; yet when they have done all, his spirit is capable of a farther degree of torment; a torment as much beyond it, as a rack is beyond a hard bed, or the sword in his bowels is beyond the scratch of a pin. The devils

indeed are the executioners and tormentors of the damned; but if that were all they were capable to suffer, the torment of the damned would be, comparatively, mild and gentle to what they are. Oh, the largeness of the understanding of man, what will it not take into its vast capacity!

But add to this, that the damned souls have all those affections laid in a deep and everlasting sleep, the exercises whereof would be relieving, by emptying their souls of any part of their misery; and all those passions throughly and everlastingly awakened, which increase their torments.

The affections of joy, delight and hope, are benumbed in them, and laid fast asleep, never to be awakened into act any more. Their hope, in scripture, is said to *perish*, *i. e.* it so perisheth, that, after death, it shall never exert another act to all eternity. The activity of any of those affections would be like a cooling gale, or refreshing spring, amidst their torments; but as Adrian lamented himself, *Nunquam jocos dabis*, Thou shalt never be merry more.

And as these affections are laid asleep, so their passions are roused, and thoroughly awakened to torment them; so awakened, as never to sleep any more. The souls of men are sometimes jogged and startled in this world, by the words or rods of God, but presently they sleep again, and forget all: but hereafter the eyes of their souls will be continually held waking, to behold and consider their misery; their understandings will be clear and most apprehensive; their thoughts fixed and determined; their consciences active and efficacious; and, by all this, their capacity to take in the fullest of their misery, enlarged to the uttermost.

Prop. 4. *The wrath, indignation, and revenge of God poured out, as the just reward of sin, upon the so capacious souls of the damned, is the principal part of their misery in hell.*

In the third proposition I shewed you, that the souls of the damned can hold more misery than all the creatures can inflict upon them. When the soul suffers from the hand of man, its sufferings are but either by way of sympathy with the body; or if immediately, yet it is but a light stroke the hand of a creature can give: But when it has to do with a sin-revenging God, and that immediately, this stroke cuts off the spirit of man, as 'tis expressed, Psal. lxxxviii. 16. The body is the cloathing of the soul. Most of the arrows shot at the soul in this world, do but stick in the cloaths (*i. e.*) reach the outward man: But in hell, the spirit of man is *the white* at which God himself shoots. All his envenomed arrows strike the soul, which is, after death, laid bare

and naked to be wounded by his hand. At death, the soul of every wicked man immediately falls into the hands of the living God; and "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," as the apostle speaks, Heb. x. 31. Their punishment is "from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his "power," 2 Thes. i. 9. They are not put over to their fellow-creatures to be punished, but God will do it himself, and glorify his power, as well as his justice, in their punishment. The wrath of God lies immediately upon their spirits, and this is the "fiery "indignation which devoureth the adversaries," Heb. x. 27. A fire that licks up the very spirit of man. Who knoweth the power of his anger! Psal. xc. 11. How insupportable it is, you may a little guess by that expression of the prophet Nahum, chap. i. 5, 6. "The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and "the earth is burnt at his presence; yea, the world, and all "that dwell therein. Who can stand before his indignation? "And who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His fury "is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by "him."

And as if anger and wrath were not words of a sufficient edge and sharpness, it is called fiery indignation and vengeance, words denoting the most intense degree of divine wrath. For indeed his power is to be glorified in the destruction of his enemies, and therefore now he will do it to purpose. He takes them now into his own hands. No creature can come at the soul immediately, that is God's prerogative, and now he hath to do with it himself in fury, and revenge is poured out. "Can thy hands be "strong, or thy heart endure when I shall deal with thee?" Ezek. xxii. 14. Alas! the spirit quails and dies under it. This is the hell of hells.

What doleful cries and lamentings have we heard from God's dearest children, when but some few drops of his anger have been sprinkled upon their souls, here in this world! But, alas! there is no compare betwixt the anger, or fatherly discipline of God over the spirits of his children, and the indignation poured out from the beginning of revenges upon his enemies.

Prop. 5. *The separate spirit of a damned man becomes a tormentor to itself by the various and efficacious actings of its own conscience, which are a special part of its torment in the other world.*

Conscience, which should have been the sinners curb on earth, becomes the whip that must lash his soul in hell. Neither is there any faculty, or power belonging to the soul of man, so fit and able to do it as his own conscience. That which was the seat

and center of all guilt, now becomes the ſeat and center of all torments. The ſuſpenſion of its tormenting power in this world is a myſtery, and wonder to all that duly conſider it. For certainly ſhould the Lord let a ſinner's conſcience fly upon him with rage, in the midſt of his ſins and pleaſures, it would put him into a hell upon earth, as we ſee in the doleful inſtances of Judas, Spira, &c. But he keeps a hand of reſtraint upon them, generally, in this life, and ſuffers them to ſleep quietly by a grumbling or ſeared conſcience, which couches by them as a ſleepy lion, and lets them alone.

But no ſooner is the Chriſtleſs ſoul turned out of the body, and caſt for eternity at the bar of God, but conſcience is rouzed, and put into a rage never to be appeaſed any more. It now racks and tortures the miſerable ſoul with its utmoſt efficacy and activity. The mere preſages and forebodings of wrath, by the conſciences of ſinners in this world, have made them lie with a ghaſtly paleneſs in their faces, univerſal trembling in all their members, a cold ſweating horror upon their panting boſoms, like men already in hell: But this, all this, is but as the ſweating of the ſtones before the great rain falls. The activities of conſcience (eſpecially in hell) are various, vigorous, and dreadful to conſider, ſuch are its *recognitions*, *accuſations*, *condemnations*, *upbraidings*, *ſhamings*, and *fearful expectations*.

1. The conſciences of the damned will recognize, and bring back the ſins commited in this world freſh to their mind: For what is conſcience, but a regiſter, or book of records, wherein every ſin is ranked in its proper place and order! This act of conſcience is fundamental to all its other acts; for it cannot accuſe, condemn, upbraid, or ſhame us for that it hath loſt out of its memory, and hath no ſenſe of. *Son remember*, ſaid Abraham to Dives, in the midſt of his torments. This remembrance of ſins paſt, mercies paſt, opportunities paſt, but eſpecially of hope paſt and gone with them, never to be recovered any more, is like that fire not blown (of which Zophar ſpeaks) which conſumes him, or the glittering ſword coming out of his gall, Job xx. 24. &c.

2. It chargeth and accuſeth the damned ſoul; and its charges are home, poſitive, and ſelf-evident charges: A thouſand legal and unexceptionable witneſſes cannot confirm any point more than one witneſs in a man's boſom can do, Rom. ii. 15. It convicts, and ſtops their mouths, leaving them without any excuſe or apology. Juſt and righteous are the judgments of God upon thee, ſaith conſcience: In all this ocean of miſery, there is not

one drop of injury or wrong: The judgment of God is according to truth.

3. It condemns as well as chargeth and witnesseth, and that with a dreadful sentence; backing and approving the sentence and judgment of God, 1 John iii. 21. every self-destroyer will be a self-condemner: This is a prime part of their misery.

——Prima est haec ultio, quod se
Judice, nemo nocens absolvitur, improba quamvis
Gratia fallacis praetoris vicerit urnam.

Juv. Sat. 13.

4. The upbraidings of conscience, in hell, are terrible and insufferable things: To be continually hit in the teeth and twitted with our madness, wilfulness, and obstinacy, as the cause of all that eternal misery which we have pulled down upon our own heads, what is it, but the rubbing of the wound with salt and vinegar? Of this torment holy Job was afraid, and therefore resolved what in him lay to prevent it, when he saith, Job xxvii. 6. "My heart (*i. e.* conscience) shall not reproach "me so long as I live." O the twits and taunts of conscience are cruel cuts and lashes to the soul!

5. The shamings of conscience are unsufferable torments. Shame ariseth from the turpitude of discovered actions. If some mens secret filthinesses were but published in this world, it would confound them; what then will it be, when all shall lie open, as it will, after this life, and their own consciences shall cast the shame of all upon them? They shall not only be derided by God, Prov. i. 26. but by their own consciences also.

Lastly, the fearful expectations of conscience, still looking forward into more and more wrath to come, this is the very sum and complement of their misery. What makes a prison so dreadful to a malefactor, but the trembling expectation he there lives under of the approaching assizes? Much after the same rate, or rather after the rate of condemned persons preparing for execution, do these spirits in prison live in the other world. But alas no instance or similitude can reach home to their case.

Prop. 6. *That which makes the torments and terrors of the damned spirits so extreme and terrible, is, that they are unremovable miseries, and torments for ever.*

They are not capable either of,

1. A partial relief, by any mitigation, or
2. A complete relief, by a final cessation.

1. Not of a partial relief, by any mitigation; could they but divert their thoughts from their misery, as they were wont to do in this world, drink and forget their sorrows; or had they but any hope of the abatement of their misery, it would be a relief to them: But both these are impossible. Their thoughts are fixed and determined: to remove them (though but for a moment) from their misery, is as impossible as to remove a mountain: Their sin and misery is ever before them. As the blessed in heaven are *bono confirmati*, so fixed and settled in blessedness, that they are not diverted one moment from beholding the blessed face of God, for they are ever with the Lord: So the damned in hell are *malo obfirmati*, so settled and fixed in the midst of all evil, that their thoughts and miseries are inseparable for ever.

2. Much less can their undone state admit the least hope of relief by a final cessation of their misery. All hope perisheth from them, and the perishing of their hope is the plainest proof that can be given of the eternity of their misery. For were there but the remotest possibility of deliverance at last, hope would hang upon that possibility: And whilst hope lives, the soul is not quite dead; the death of hope is the death of a man's spirit: The cutting off of the soul from God, and the last act of hope to see or enjoy him for ever, is that death which an immortal soul is capable of suffering. "Depart from "me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire," is that sentence which strikes hope and soul dead for ever. In these six propositions you have the true and terrible representation of the spirits in prison, or the state of damned souls. I have not mentioned their association with devils, or the dismal place of their confinement, which, though they complete their misery, yet are not the principal parts of it, but rather accessories to it, or rivers running into the ocean of their misery. The sum of their misery lies in what was opened before, and the improvement of it is in that which followeth.

Infer. 1. Is this the state of ungodly souls after death? Then it follows, that *neither death nor annihilation are the worst of evils incident to man.* Aristotle calls death *the most terrible of all terribles*, and the schoolmen affirm annihilation to be a greater evil than the most miserable being: But it is neither so, nor so; the wrath of God, the worm of conscience, are much more bitter than death. The pains of death are natural and bodily pains: The wrath of God and anguish of conscience are spiritual and inward: Those are but the pains of a few hours or days, these are the unrelieved torments of eternity.

And as for annihilation, what a favour would the damned account it! Indeed if we respect the glory of God's justice, which is exemplified and illustrated in the ruin of these miserable souls; it is better they should abide as the eternal monuments thereof, than not to be at all; but with respect to themselves we may say, as Christ doth of the son of perdition, Mat. xxvi. 24. "Good had it been for them if they had never been "born." For a man's soul to be of no other use than a vessel of wrath, to receive the indignation, and be filled with the fury of God; surely an untimely birth, that never was animated with a reasonable soul, is better than they: For alas! they seek for death, but it flies from them. The immortality of their souls, which was their dignity and privilege above other creatures, is now their misery, and that which continually feeds and perpetuates their flame. Here is a being without the comfort of it, a being only to howl and tremble under divine wrath, a being therefore which they would gladly exchange with the contemptiblest fly, or most lothsome toad, but it cannot be exchanged, or annihilated.

Infer. 2. Hence it follows, *that the pleasures of sin are dear bought, and costly pleasures.* There is a greater disproportion betwixt that pleasure and this wrath, than betwixt a drop of honey and a sea of gall. Could a man distil all the imaginary pleasure of sin, and drink nothing else but the highest and most refined delights of it all his life, though his life should be protracted to the term of Methuselah's; yet one day, or night, under the wrath of God would make it a dear bargain. But,

1. 'Tis certain sin hath no such pleasures to give you: They are embittered either by adverse strokes of providence from without, or painful and dreadful gripes and twinges of conscience, within; Job xx. 14. "His meat in his bowels is turned, "it is the gall of asps within him."

2. 'Tis as certain, the time of a sinner is near its period when he is at the height of his pleasure in sin: For look, as high delights in God speak the maturity of a soul for heaven, and it will not be long before such be in heaven; so the heights of delight in sin, answerably speak the maturity of such a soul for hell, and it will not be long e'er it be there. Sin is now a big embryo, and speedily the soul travails with death.

3. According to the measure of delights men have had in sin, will be the degrees and measures of their torments in hell, Rev. xviii. 7. so much torment and sorrow, as there was delight, and pleasure in sin.

4. To conclude, "the pleasures of sin are but for a season,"

as you read, Heb. xi. 25. but the wrath of God in hell is for ever and ever. There is a time when the pleasures of sin cannot be called pleasures to come, but the wrath of God that will still be wrath to come. Oh! consider for what a trifle you sell your souls. When Lysimachus parted with his kingdom for a draught of water, he said when he had drank it, *For how short a pleasure have I sold a kingdom!* And Jonathan lamented, 1 Sam. xiv. 43. "I tasted but a little honey, and I must die." Satan would not charm so powerfully as he doth with the pleasures of sin, if this point were well believed, and heartily applied.

Inf. 3. *What a matchless madness is it to cast the soul into God's prison, to save the body out of man's prison!*

Men have their prisons, and God hath his: But because the one is an object of sense, and the other an object of faith, that only is feared, and this slighted all over this unbelieving world; except by a very small number of men, who tremble at the word of God. Now this I say is the height of madness, and will appear to be so in a just collation of both in a few particulars. (1.) Man's prison restrains the body only, God's prison soul and body, Mat. x. 28. The spirits of men (as my text speaks) are the prisoners there. Oh! what a vast odds doth this single difference make! A thousand times more than the captivating and binding of the greatest king or emperor differs from the imprisonment of a poor mechanic or vagrant beggar. (2.) In man's prison there are many comforts and unspeakable refreshments from heaven, but in God's prison none, but the direct contrary. You read of the apostles, Acts xvi. 25 how they sang in the prison: The Spirit of God made them a banquet of heavenly joys, and they could not but sing at it: Though their feet were in the stocks, their spirits were never more at liberty. Algerius dated his letters *from the delectable orchard of the Leonine prison; where*, saith he, *flows the sweetest nectar.* Another tells us, Christ was always kind to him; but since he became a prisoner for him, he even overcame himself in kindness. *I verily think* (saith he) *the chains of my Lord are all overlaid with pure gold, and his cross perfumed.* But the worst terrors of the prisoners in hell come from the presence of the Lord, 2 Thes. i. 9. "God is a terror to them." (3.) The cause for which a man is cast into prison by men, may be his duty, and so his conscience must be at least quiet, if not joyful in such sufferings. So was it with Paul, Acts xxviii. 20. "For the hope of Israel am I bound with this

"chain:" This diffuses joy and peace through the consciences into the whole man. But the cause for which men are cast into God's prison, is their sin and guilt, which arms their own consciences against them, and makes them, as you heard before, self-tormentors, terrors to themselves. What odds is here! (4.) In man's prison the most excellent company and sweet society may be found. Paul and Silas were fellow-prisoners. In queen Mary's days the most excellent company to be found in England was in the prisons: Prisons were turned into churches. But in God's prison no better society is to be found than that of devils and damned reprobates, Mat. xxv. 41. (5.) In man's prisons there is hope of a comfortable deliverance, but in God's prison none: Mat. v. 26. "Thou shalt not come out thence "till thou hast paid the last mite." 'Tis an everlasting prison.

Compare these few obvious particulars, and judge then what is to be thought of that man, who stands readier to cast himself into any guilt, than into the least suffering. What is it but as if a man should offer his neck to the sword, to save his hand? The Lord convince us what trifles our estates, liberties, and lives are to our souls, or to the peace and purity of our consciences.

Infer. 4. *What an invaluable mercy is the pardon of sin, which sets the soul out of all danger of going into this prison!* When the debt is satisfied, a man may walk as boldly before the prison door as he doth before his own: They that owe nothing, fear no bailiffs. 'Tis the law (as I said before) that commits men to prison, a mittimus is but an instrument of law; but the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them that believe, Rom. viii. 4. Yea, they are made *the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. There can be no process of law against them. For who shall condemn when it is God that justifieth? Rom. viii. 33, 34. And that Divine justice might be no bar to our faith and comfort, he adds, *It is Christ that died*; and yet farther, to assure us that his death had made plenary satisfaction to God for all our sins and debts, it is added, *yea, rather, that is risen again*: q. d. If the debts of believers to God were not fully paid and satisfied for by the blood of Christ, how comes it to pass that our surety is discharged, as by his resurrection he appears to be! Oh believer! thy bonds are cancell'd, the hand-writing that was against thee is nailed to the cross, the blood of Christ hath done that for thee that all the gold and silver in the world could not do, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. "It is a * coun-

* Ἀντίλυτρον ἐστὶ pretium ex adverso respondens.

"terprice fully answering to thy debts," Mat. xx. 28. And hence, to the eternal joy of thy heart, result three properties of thy pardon, which are able to make thine eyes gush out with tears of joy whilst thou art reading of it.

1. It is a free pardon to thy soul; though it cost Christ dear, its costs thee nothing. We have redemption, even "the remis-"sion of sins, according to the riches of his grace," Eph. i. 7. The project of it was God's, not thine; the price for it was Christ's blood, not thine; the glory and riches of free grace are illustriously displayed in thy forgivenness.

2. It is as full as it is free; a complete and perfect cause produceth a complete and perfect effect, Acts xiii. 39. "Justified "from all things." Whatever thy sins be for nature, number, or circumstances of aggravations, they cannot exceed the value of the meritorious cause of remission. The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

3. It must be as firm as it is free and full, even an irrevocable pardon for evermore. Christ did not shed his blood at a hazard; the way of justification by faith, makes the promise sure, Rom. iv. 16. The Justified shall never come again under condemnation. Oh the unspeakable joy that flows from this spring! Oh the triumphs of faith upon this foundation!

Is it not ravishing, melting, overwhelming, and amazing, to think thus with thyself! Here sit I with a joyful, plenary, free pardon of sin in my hand, whilst many, who never sinned to that height and degree I have, lie groaning, howling, sweating, and trembling under the indignation of God, poured out like fire upon their souls in hell. A greater sinner saved, and lesser damned. Oh how unspeakably sweet is that rest into which my terrified and disquieted soul is come by faith! Rom. v. 1. Heb. iv. 3. "We which have believed, do enter into rest." Oh blessed calm after a dreadful tempest! This poor breast of mine was lately panting, sweating, trembling under the horrors of wrath to come, terrified with the visions of hell. No other sound was in mine ears, but that of fiery indignation to devour the adversaries. Oh what price can be put upon my *quietus est!* What value upon a pardon, delivered as it were at the ladder's foot! Oh precious hand of faith that receives it! But oh the most precious blood of Christ which purchased it! If Satan now come with his accusations, the law with its comminations, death with its dreadful summons, I have in a readiness to answer them all.

Here is the law, the wrath of God, and everlasting burnings, the just demerit of sin upon one side, and a poor sinful creature on the other: But the covenant of grace hath solved all. An act

of oblivion is past in heaven, "I will forgive their iniquities, and "their sins and transgressions will I remember no more." In this act of grace my soul is included; I am in Christ, and there is no condemnation. Die I must, but damned I shall not be: My debts are paid, my bonds are cancelled, my conscience is quieted: let death do its worst, it shall do me no harm; that blood which satisfied God, may well satisfy me.

Infer. 5. *How amazingly sad and deplorable is the security, and stilness of the consciences of sinners, under all their own guilt, and the immediate danger of God's everlasting wrath!*

Philosophers observe that before an earth-quake the wind lies, and the weather is exceeding calm and still, not a breath of wind going. So it is in the consciences of many, just before the tempest and storm of God's wrath pours down upon them. What a golden morning opened upon Sodom, and began that fatal day! Little did they imagine showers of fire had been ready to fall from so pleasant and serene a sky as they saw over their heads. How secure, still, and unconcerned are those to day, who it may be shall rage, roar, and tremble in hell to morrow! Cæsar hearing of a citizen of Rome who was deep in debt, and yet slept soundly, would needs have his pillow, as supposing there was some strange, charming virtue in it.

It is wonderful to consider what shift men make to keep their consciences in that stilness and quiet they do, under such loads of guilt, and threatnings of wrath, ready to be executed upon them. It must be strong *opium* that so stupifies and benumbs their consciences; and upon inquiry into the matter we shall find it to be the effect of,

1. A strong delusion of Satan.
2. A spiritual judicial stroke of God.

1. This stilness of conscience, upon the brink of damnation, proceeds from the strong delusions of Satan; blinding their eyes: and feeding their false hopes: He removes the evil day at many years imaginary distance from them, and interposeth many a fair day betwixt them and it, and in that interposed season, time enough to prepare for it; without such an artifice as this, his house would be in an uproar, but this keeps all in peace, Luke xi. 21. "By presuming he feeds their hopes, and by "their hopes destroys their souls *." Some he diverts from all serious thoughts of this day by the pleasures, and others by the cares of this life: and so that day cometh upon them unawares, Luke xxi. 34.

* *Præsumendo sperans, et sperando perimit.*

2. This illness of conscience, in so miserable and dangerous a state, is the effect of a spiritual, judicial stroke of God upon the children of wrath. That's a dreadful word, Isa. vi. 10. "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears "heavy, and shut their eyes:" The eye and ear are the two principal doors or inlets to the heart; when these are shut, the heart must needs be insensible, as the † fat of the body is. There is a spirit of a deep sleep poured out judicially upon some men, Isa. xxix. 10. such as that upon Adam when God took a rib from his side, and he felt it not: But this is upon the soul, and is the same as to give up a man to a reprobate sense.

Infer. 6. *The case of distressed consciences upon earth, is exceeding sad, and calls upon all for the tenderest pity, and utmost help from men.*

You see the labourings of conscience, under the sense of guilt and wrath, is a special part of the torments of hell; of which there is not a livelier emblem or picture, than the distresses of consciences in this world.

It must be thankfully confessed there are two great differences betwixt the terrors of conscience here, and there: One, in the degrees of anguish, the other, in the reliefs of that anguish. The ordinary distresses of conscience here, compared with those of the damned, are as the flame of a candle to a fiery oven, a mild and gentle fire; or as the sparks that fly out of the top of a chimney, to the dreadful eruptions of Vesuvius, or mount Etna. Besides, these are capable of relief, but those are unrelievable: Their hearts die, because their hope is perished from the Lord.

But yet of all the miseries and distresses incident to men in this world, none like those of distressed consciences; the terrors of God set themselves in array, or are drawn up in battalia against the soul, Job vi. 4. "Whilst I suffer thy terrors (saith "Heman) I am distracted," Psal. lxxxviii. 15. Yea, they not only distract, but cut off the spirit, as he adds, ver. 16. They lick up the very spirit of a man, and none can bear them, Prov. xviii. 14. for now a man hath to do immediately with God; yea, with the wrath of the great and dreadful God: And this wrath, which is the most acute and sharp of all torments, falls upon the most tender and sensible part, the spirit and mind which now lies open and naked before him to be wounded by it. No creature can administer the least relief, by the application of any temporal comfort or refreshment to it. Gold and silver, wife

† Naturalists agree that fat not only makes animals unruly, but also, is void of sensation. *Cluss.*

and children, meat and melody, ſignify no more than the drawing off a ſilk ſtocking to cure the *paroxyſms* of the *gout*.

All that can be done for their relief, is by ſeaſonable, judicious, and tender applications of ſpiritual remedies: And what can be done, ought to be done for them. What heart can hear a voice like that of Job, "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, "O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me;" and not melt into compaſſion over them? Is there a word of wiſdom in thy heart, let thy tongue apply it to the relief of thy diſtreſſed brother: Whilſt his heart meditates *terror*, let thine meditate his *ſuccour*. It is not impoſſible but thou, who lendeſt a friendly hand to another, mayeſt, e'er long, need one thyſelf; and he that hath ever felt the terrors of the Almighty upon his ſoul, hath motive enough to draw forth the bowels of his pity to another in the like caſe.

Alas for poor diſtreſſed ſouls, who have either none about them that underſtand, and are able and willing to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to their weary ſouls, or too many about them to exaſperate their ſorrows, and perſecute them whom God hath ſmitten. You that have both ability and opportunity for it, are under the ſtrongeſt engagements in the world to endeavour their relief with all faithfulneſs, ſeriouſneſs, compaſſion, and conſtancy. Did Chriſt ſhed his blood for the ſaving of ſouls, and wilt not thou ſpend thy breath for them? Shall any man that hath found mercy from God, ſhew none to his brother? God forbid. A ſoul in hell is out of your reach; but theſe that are in the ſuburbs of hell are not: The candle of intenſe ſorrow is put to the thread of their miſerable life; and ſhould they be ſuffered to drop into hell, whilſt you ſtand by as unconcerned ſpectators of ſuch a tragedy, you will have little peace. Your unmercifulneſs to their ſouls will be a wound to your own.

Infer. 7. *Be hence informed of the evil that is in ſin, be convinced of the evil that is in it, by the eternal miſery that followeth it.*

If hell be out of meaſure dreadful, then ſin muſt be out of meaſure ſinful: The torments of hell do not exceed the demerit of ſin, though they exceed the underſtandings of men to conceive them. God will lay upon no man more than is right. Sin is the founder of hell; all the miſeries and torments there, are but the treaſures of wrath which ſinners, in all ages, have been treaſuring up; and how dreadful ſoever it be, it is but the Αντιμισθια, the recompenſe which is meet, Rom. vi. 23. "The wages of ſin is death."

We have ſlight thoughts of ſin; *Fools make a mock of ſin:*

But if the Lord by the convictions of mens consciences did but lead them thro' the chambers of death, and give them a sight of the wrath to come; could we but see the piles that are made in hell (as the prophet calls them, Isa. xxx. 33.) to maintain the flames of vengeance to eternity; could we but understand in what dialect the damned speak of sin, who see the treasures of wrath broken up to avenge it, surely it would alter our apprehensions of sin, and strike cold to the very hearts of sinners.

Cannot the extremity and eternity of hell-torments exceed the evil that is in sin? What words then can express the evil of it? Hell flames have the nature of a punishment, but not of an atonement.

Oh think on this, you that look upon sin as the veriest trifle, that will sin for the value of a penny, that look upon all the humiliations, broken-hearted confessions, and bitter moans of the saints under sin, as frenzy, or melancholy, slighting them as a company of half-witted hypochondriac persons! Thou that never hadst one sick night, or sad day in all thy life upon the account of sin, let me tell thee, that breast of thine must be the seat of sorrow; that frothy airy spirit of thine must be acquainted with emphatical sobs and groans. God grant it may be on this side hell, by effectual repentance; else it must be there, in the extremity and eternity of sorrows.

Infer. 8. *What enemies are they to the souls of men, who are Satan's instruments, to draw them into sin, or who suffer sin to lie upon them!*

When there were but two persons in the world, one drew the other into sin; and among the millions of men and women now in the world, where are there two to be found that have in no case been snares to draw some into sin? Some tempt designedly, taking the devil's work out of his hands; others virtually and consequentially, by examples, which have a compelling power to draw others with them into sin. The first sort are among the worst of sinners, Prov. i. 18. the latter are among the best of saints; see Gal. ii. 14. whose conversation is so much in heaven, that nothing falls out in the course thereof, which may not farther some or other in their way to hell?

Among wicked men, there are five sorts eminently accessory to the guilt and ruin of other men's souls. (1.) Loose professors, whose lives give their lips the lie; whose conversations make their professions blush. (2.) Scandalous apostates, whose fall is more prejudicial than their profession was ever beneficial to others. (3.) Cruel persecutors, who make the lives, liber-

ties, and estates of men the occasion of the ruin of their consciences. (4.) Ignorant and unfaithful ministers, who strengthen the hands of the wicked, that they should not return from their wickedness. (5.) Wicked relations, who quench and damp every hopeful beginning of conviction and affection in their friends. Of all which I shall distinctly speak in the next discourse, to which, therefore, I remit it at present.

And many there are who suffer sin to lie upon others, without a wise and seasonable reproof to recover them.

Oh what cruelty to souls is here! The day is coming when they will curse the time that ever they knew you: 'Tis possible you may repent, but then, it may be, those, whose souls you have helped to ruin, are gone, and quite out of your reach. The Lord make you sensible what you have done in season, lest your repentance come too late for yourselves, and them also.

Infer. 9. *How poor a comfort is it to him that carries all his sins out of this world with him, to leave much earthly treasure (especially if gotten by sin) behind him?*

It is a poor consolation to be praised where thou art not, and tormented where thou art ‡; to purchase a life of pleasure to others on earth, at the price of thy own everlasting misery in hell. All the consolation, sensual, voluptuous, and oppressing worldlings have, is but this, that they were *coached to hell* in pomp and state, and have left the same *chariot* to bring their graceless children after them, in the same equipage, to the place of torments. There be five considerations provoking pity to them that are thus past into a miserable eternity, and caution to all that are following after, in the same path.

First, That fatal mistake in the practical understanding and judgment of men deserves a compassionate lamentation, as the cause and reason of their eternal miscarriage and ruin. They looked upon trifles as things of greatest necessity, and the most necessary things as mere trifles; putting the greatest weight and value upon that which little concerned them, and none at all upon their greatest concernment in the whole world, Luke xii. 21.

Secondly, The perpetual diversions that the trifles of this world gave them from the main use and end of their time. O what a hurry and thick succession of earthly business and encumbrances filled up their days! So that they could find no

‡ *Quid prodest esse, quod esse non prodest?* Tertull.

time to go alone, and think of the awful and weighty concernments of the world to come, James v. 5.

Thirdly, The total waſte and expence of the only ſeaſon of ſalvation, about theſe vaniſhing, impertinent trifles, which is never more to be recovered, Eccleſ. ix. 10.

Fourthly, That theſe deluding ſhadows, the pleaſures of a moment, is all they had in exchange for their ſouls, a goodly price it was valued at, Mat. xvi. 26.

Fifthly, That by ſuch a life they have not only ruined their own ſouls, but put their poſterity, by their education of them in the ſame courſe of life, into the ſame path of deſtruction, in which they went to hell before them. Pſal. xlix. 13. "Their "poſterity approve their ſaying."

Infer. 10. *How rational and commendable is the courage and reſolution of thoſe Chriſtians, who chuſe to bear all the ſufferings in this world from the hands of men, rather than to defile and wound their conſciences with ſin, and thereby expoſe their ſouls to the wrath of God for ever!*

That which men now call pride, humour, fancy, and ſtubbornneſs, will, one day, appear to be their great wiſdom, and the excellency of their ſpirits. It is the tenderneſs of their conſciences, not the pride and ſtoutneſs of their ſtomachs, which makes them inflexible to ſin; they know the terrors of a wounded conſcience, and had rather endure any other trouble from the hands of men, than fall by known ſin, into the hands of an angry God. Try them in other matters, wherein the glory of God, and the peace or purity of their conſciences are not concerned, and ſee if you can charge them with ſtubbornneſs and ſingularity. It was the excellency of the ſpirits of the primitive Chriſtians, that they durſt tell the emperor, to his face, when he threatned them with torments; "Pardon us, O emperor, "thou threatneſt us with a priſon, but God with hell *." Do we call that ingenuity and good nature, which makes the mind ſoft and tractable to temptations, and will rather venture upon guilt than be eſteemed ſingular?

"† Salvian tells us of ſome in his time, who were compel-"led to be evil, leſt they ſhould be accounted vile." And was that their excellency? May I not fitly apply the words of Salvian here: O in what honour and repute is Chriſt among Chriſtians, when religion ſhall make them baſe and ignoble! He

* *Ignoſce imperator; tu carcerem minaris, Deus gehennam.*
† *Mali eſſe coguntur, ne viles habeantur.*

that understands what the punishment of sin will be in hell, should endure all things rather than yield to sin on earth. Indeed, if you that threaten, and tempt others to violate their consciences, could bear the wrath of God for them in hell, it were somewhat; but we know there is no suffering by a *proxy* there, they tremble at the word of God, and have felt the burden of guilt, and dare not yield to sin, tho' they yield their estates and bodies to prevent it.

Infer. 11. *How patiently should we bear the afflictions of this life, by which sin is prevented and purged?*

The discipline of our spirits belongs to God the Father of Spirits; he corrects us here, that we may not be punished hereafter, 1 Cor. xi. 32. "We are chastened of the Lord, that we "may not be condemned with the world." It is better for us to groan under afflictions on earth, than to roar under revenging wrath in hell. Parents who are wise, as well as tender, had rather hear their children sob and cry under the rod, than stand with halters about their necks on the ladder, bewailing the destructive indulgence of their parents.

Your chastisements, when sanctified, are preventive of all the misery opened before. It is therefore as unreasonable to murmur against God, because you smart under his rod, as it would be to accuse your dearest friend of cruelty, because he strained your arm to snatch you from the fall of a house, or wall, which he saw ready to crush and overwhelm you in its ruins.

If we had less affliction, we should have more guilt. We see how apt we are to break over the hedge, and go astray from God, with all the clogs of afflictions designed for our restraint; what should we do if we had no clog at all; It is better for you to be whipped to heaven with all the rods of affliction, than coached to hell with all the pleasures of the world.

Christian, thy God sees, if thou do not, that all these troubles are few enough to save thee from sin and hell. Thy corruptions require all these, and all little enough. "If need be, "ye are in heaviness," 1 Pet. i. 6. If there be need for it, thy dearest comforts on earth shall die, that thy soul may live; but if thy mortification to them render thy removal needless, thou and they shall live together. 'Tis better to be preserved in brine, than rot in honey. Sanctified afflictions, working under the efficacy of the blood of Christ, are the safest way to our souls.

Infer. 12. *How doleful a change doth the death of wicked men make upon them! from palaces on earth, to the prison of hell.*

No sooner is the soul of a wicked man stepped out of his own door at death, but the serjeants of hell are immediately upon it, serving the dreadful summons on the law-condemned wretch. This arrest terrifies it more than the hand-writing upon the plaister of the wall did him, Dan. v. 5. How are all a man's apprehensions changed in a moment! Out of what a deep sleep are most, and out of what a pleasant dream of heaven are some awaked and startled at death, by the dreadful arrest and summons of God to condemnation.

How quickly would all a sinner's mirth be damped, and turned into howlings in this world, if conscience were but throughly awakened! It is but for God to change our apprehensions now, and it would be done in a moment: but the eyes of most mens souls are not opened till death hath shut their bodily eyes; and then how sudden, and how sad a change is made in one day!

O think what it is to pass from all the pleasures and delights of this world into the torments and miseries of that world; from a pleasant habitation, into an infernal prison; from the depth of security, to the extremity of desperation; from the arms and bosoms of dearest friends and relations, to the society of damned spirits! Lord, what a change is here; had a gracious change been made upon their hearts by grace, no such doleful change could have been made upon their state by death: little do their surviving friends think what they feel, or what is their estate in the other world, whilst they are honouring their bodies with splendid and pompous funerals. None on earth have so much reason to fear death, to make much of life, and use all means to continue it, as those who will, and must, be so great losers by the exchange.

Infer. 13. *See here the certainty, and inevitableness of the Judgment of the great day.*

This prison, which is continually filling with the spirits of wicked men, is an undeniable evidence of it: for why is hell called a prison, and why are the spirits of men confined and chained there, but with respect to the judgment of the great day? As there is a necessary connection betwixt sin and punishment, so betwixt punishing and trying the offender; there are millions of souls in custody, a world of spirits in prison; these must be brought forth to their trial, for God will lay upon no man more than is right; the legality of their *mittimus* to hell, will be evidenced in their solemn day of [illegible]. God hath therefore "appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained," Acts xvii. 31.

Here ſinners run in arrears, and contract vaſt debts; in hell they are ſeized and committed, at judgment tried and caſt for the ſame. This will be a dreadful day, thoſe that have ſpent ſo prodigally upon the patience of God, muſt now come to a ſevere account for all; they have paſt their particular judgment immediately after death, Eccl. xii. 7. Heb. ix. 27. By this they know how they ſhall ſpeed in the general judgment, and how it ſhall be with them for ever, but tho' this private judgment ſecures their damnation ſufficiently, yet it clears not the juſtice of God before angels and men ſufficiently, and therefore they muſt appear once more before his bar, 2 Cor. v. 10. In the fearful expectation of this day, thoſe trembling ſpirits now lie in priſon, and that fearful expectation is a principal part of their preſent miſery and torment. You that refuſe to come to the throne of grace, ſee if you can refuſe to make your appearance at the bar of juſtice; you that braved and brow-beat your miniſters that warned you of it, ſee if you can out-brave your judge too as you did them. Nothing more ſure or awful than ſuch a day as this.

Infer. 14. *How much are miniſters, parents, and all to whom the charge of ſouls is committed, bound to do all that in them lies, to prevent their everlaſting miſery in the world to come!*

The great apoſtle of the Gentiles found the conſideration of the terror of the Lord, as a ſpur urging, and enforcing him to a miniſterial faithfulneſs and diligence; 2 Cor. v. 11. "Know-"ing therefore the terrors of the Lord, we perſuade men." And the ſame he preſſeth upon Timothy, 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. "I charge "thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who "ſhall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his "kingdom; preach the word; be inſtant in ſeaſon and out of "ſeaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-ſuffering and "doctrine." Oh that thoſe to whom ſo great a truſt as the ſouls of men is committed, would labour to acquit themſelves with all faithfulneſs therein, as Paul did, warning every one night and day with tears, that if we cannot prevent their ruin, which is moſt deſirable; yet at leaſt we may be able to take God to witneſs, as he did, that we are pure from the blood of all men.

Oh! conſider, my brethren, if your faithful plainneſs, and unwearied diligence to ſave men's ſouls produce no other fruit but the hatred of you now; yet it is much eaſier for you to bear that, than that they and you too ſhould bear the wrath of God for ever.

We have all of us perſonal guilt enough upon us; let us not add other men's guilt to our account: to be guilty of the blood of the meaneſt man upon earth, is a ſin which will cry in your conſciences; but to be guilty of the blood of ſouls, Lord, who can bear it! Chriſt thought them worth his heart blood, and are they not worth the expence of our breath? Did he ſweat blood to ſave them, and will not we move our lips to ſave them? It is certainly a ſore judgment to the ſouls of men, when ſuch miniſters are ſet over them as never underſtood the value of their peoples ſouls, or were never heartily concerned about the ſalvation of their own ſouls.

* *

MATTH. xvi. 26. *For what is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?*

DIFFICULT duties need to be enforced with powerful arguments. In the 24th verſe of this chapter, our Lord preſſeth upon his diſciples the deepeſt and hardeſt duties of ſelf-denial, acquaints them upon what terms they muſt be admitted into his ſervice: "If any man will come after me, let him "deny himſelf, and take up his croſs and follow me."

This hard and difficult duty he enforceth upon them by a double argument, *viz.* From,

1. The vanity of all ſinful ſhifts from it, ver. 25.

2. The value of their ſouls, which is imported in it, ver. 26.

They may ſhift off their duty to the loſs of their ſouls, or ſave their ſouls by the loſs of ſuch trifles. If they eſteem their ſouls above the world, and can be content to put all other things to the hazard for their ſalvation, making account to ſave nothing but them by Chriſtianity; then they come up to Chriſt's terms, and may warrantably and boldly call him their Lord and Maſter; and to ſweeten this choice to them, he doth, in my text, balance the ſoul and all the world, weighing them one againſt the other, and ſhews them the infinite odds and diſproportion betwixt them: "What is a man profited, if he ſhall gain "the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? or what ſhall a man "give in exchange for his ſoul?"

What is a man profited?] There is a plain meioſis in the phraſe; and the meaning is, how ineſtimably and irreparably is a man damnified! what a ſoul-ruining bargain would a man make!

If he should gain the whole world.] There is a plain hyperbole in this phrase; for it never was, nor ever will be the lot of any man to be the sole owner and possessor of the whole world*. But suppose all the power, pleasure, wealth, and honour of the whole world were bid and offered in exchange for a man's soul; what a dear purchase would it be at such a rate! "What were this, says one †, but to win Venice, and then be "hanged at the gate of it?" As that man acts like a mad man, that goes about to purchase a treasure of gold with the loss of his life; for life being lost, what is all the gold in the world to him? he can have no enjoyment of it, or comfort in it: so here, what is all the world, or as many worlds as there are creatures in it, when the soul is lost, if he gain this?

And lose his own soul.] The comparison lies here betwixt one single soul and the whole world. The whole world is no price for the poorest, meanest, and most despised soul that lives in it.

By losing the soul, we are not to understand the destruction of its being, but of its happiness and comfort, the cutting it off from God, and all the hopes of his favour and enjoyment for ever. This is the loss here intended, a loss never to be repaired. The whole world can be no recompence for the loss to the soul, if it be but the loss of its purity or peace for a time; much less can it recompence the loss of the soul, in the loss of all its happiness for ever. When a man's chief happiness is finally lost, then is his soul lost: for what benefit can it be, nay, how great a misery must it be, to have a being perpetuated in torments for ever? ‡ This is the *fine* or *mulct* which is set upon sin, as some render the word. What shall a man gain by such pleasures, for which God will *mulct*, or *fine* him at the rate or price of his own soul? That is, of all the happiness, joy, and comfort of it to all eternity.

Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? ‖ The question aggravates the sense, and amplifies the loss and damage of the man that sells his soul for the whole world. There is no recompense in all the world for the hazard or danger of the

* By this hypothetical hyperbole is denoted the great atrociousness of losing eternal salvation. *Glassius.*

† *Non magis juvabitur, quam qui acquirit Venetias, ipse vero suspendatur ad portam.* Paræus in loc.

‡ *Anima vero sua multetur, i. e.* If one is punished with the loss of his own soul. *Brz. Maldon.*

‖ *Interrogatio exaggerans.*

that one hour: nor would a man that understands what a soul and eternity are, put it into danger for ten thousand worlds, much less for one penny, yea, for nothing, as many do: but to barter or exchange it for the world, to take any thing in lieu of it; this is the height of madness. "The way of buying "in former times was not by money, but by the exchange of one "commodity for another;" and to this custom * Brugensis thinks this phrase is allusive. Now what commodity is found in all the world; or who that is not blinded by the god of this world, can think that the whole world itself, if all the rocks in it were rocks of diamonds, and the seas and rivers were liquid gold, is a commodity of equivalent worth to his own soul? Hence two notes arise naturally,

Doct. 1. *That one soul is of more value than the whole world.*

Doct. 2. *How precious and invaluable soever the soul of man is, it may be lost and cast away for ever.*

I begin with the first,

Doct. 1. *That one soul is of more value than the whole world.*

I need not spend much time in the proof of it, when you have considered, that he who bought them, hath here weighed and valued them; and that the point before us is the result and conclusion of one that hath the best reason to know the true worth of them. That which I have to do is to gather out of the scripture the particulars; which, put together, make up the full demonstration of the point. And,

1. The invaluable worth of souls appears from the manner of their creation. They were created immediately by God, as hath been proved, and that not without the deliberation of the whole Trinity; Gen. i. 26. "Let us make man." For the production of other creatures, it was enough to give out the word of his command. "Let there be light, let the earth and the waters "bring forth;" but when he comes to man, then you have no FIAT, *let there be*, but he puts his own hand immediately to it, as to the master-piece of the whole creation: yea, a council is called about it; *Let us*, implying the just consultation and deliberation of all the persons in the Godhead about it, that our hearts might be raised to the expectation of some extraordinary work to follow; great counsels and wise debates being both the forerunners and foundations of great actions and events to ensue

* *Ἀνταλλαγμα vocat id quo data, redimitur aliquid; juxta piscatorum commercia, quæ non mutantur, sed rerum permutationes constabant.* Brugens.

thereupon. Thus Elihu in Job xxxv. 10. "None saith, Where "is God my makers?" And David, in Psal. cxlix. 2. "Let "Israel rejoice in his Makers:" in both places the word is plural. The consultation here is only amongst the divine Persons, no angels are called to this council table, the whole matter was to be conducted by the wisdom, and effected by the power of God; and therefore there was no need to consult with any but himself, the wisdom of angels being from him: but this great council shews what an excellent creature was now to be produced, and the excellency of that creature man, was principally in his soul; for the bodies of other creatures, which were made by the word of his command, are as beautiful, elegant, and neat as the body of man; yea, and in some respects more excellent. The soul then was that rare piece which God in so condescending an expression tells us was created with the deliberation of the Godhead; those great and excellent Persons laid their heads, as it were, together to project its being.

And by the way, this may smartly check the pride and arrogance of souls, who dare take it upon them to teach God, as murmurs at his disposals of us. Shall that soul which is the product of his wisdom and counsel, dare to instruct or counsel its Maker? But that by the by. You see there is a transcendent dignity and worth in the soul of man above all other beings in the world, by the peculiar way of its production into the number of created beings: no wise man deliberates long, or calls a council about ordinary matters, much less the Allwise God.

2. The soul hath in itself an intrinsic worth and excellency, worthy of that divine original whence it sprang: view it in its noble faculties, and admirable powers, and it will appear to be a creature upon which God hath laid out the riches of his wisdom and power.

There you shall find a mind susceptive of all light, both natural and spiritual, shining as the candle of God in the inner man, closing with truth, as the iron doth with the attractive loadstone, a shop in which all arts and sciences are laboured and formed: what are all the famous libraries and monuments of learning, but so many systems of thoughts laboured and perfected in the active inquisitive minds of men? Truth is its natural and delectable object, it pursues eagerly after it, and even spends itself and the body too in the chase and prosecution of truth; when it lies deep, as a subterranean treasure *, the mind sends out inno-

* *Veritas in puteo*, *i. e.* Truth in the well.

mirable thoughts, reinforcing each other in thick successions, to dig for, and compass that invaluable treasure; if it be disguised by misrepresentations and vulgar prejudice, and trampled in the dirt under that disguise, there is an ability in the mind to discern it by some lines and features, which are all well known to it, and both own, honour, and vindicate it under all that dirt and obloquy, with more respect than a man will take up a piece of gold, or a sparkling diamond out of the mire: it searches after it by many painful deductions of reason, and † triumphs more in the discovery of it, than in all earthly treasures; no gratification of sense like that of the mind, when it grasps its prey for which it hunted.

The mind passes through all the works of creation, it views the several creatures on earth, considers the fabric, use, and beauty of animals, the signatures of plants penetrating thereby into their nature and virtues: it views the vast ocean, and the large train of causes laid together in all these things, for the good of man, by God, whose name it reads in the most diminutive creature it beholds on earth.

It can, in a moment, mount itself from earth to heaven, view the face thereof, describe the motions of the sun in the ecliptic, calculate tables for the motions of the planets and fixed stars, invent convenient cycles for the computation of time, foretel, at a great distance, the dismal eclipses of the sun and moon to the very digit, and the portentous conjunctions of the planets, to the very minute of their ingress: These are the pleasant employments of the Understanding.

But there is a higher game at which this eagle plays, it reckons itself all this while employed as much beneath its capacity, as Domitian in catching flies; though these be lawful and pleasant exercises, when it hath leisure for them, yet it is fitted for a much nobler exercise, even to penetrate the glorious mysteries of redemption, to trace redeeming love through all the astonishing methods, and manifold discoveries of it; and yet higher than all this, it is capable of an imediate sight, or facial vision of the blessed God, short of which it receives no pleasure that is fully agreeable to its noble power and infinite appetite.

View its Will, and you shall find it like a queen upon the throne of the soul, swaying the sceptre of liberty in her hand,

† Archimedes, when he made a valuable discovery of a new truth, leapt out of the bath for joy, crying, I have found it, I have found it.

(as one * expresseth it) with all the affections waiting attending upon her. No tyrant can force it, no torment can wrest the golden sceptre of liberty out of its hand, the keys of all the chambers of the soul hang at its girdle, those it delivers to Christ in the day of his power; victorious grace sweetly overmasters it by gaining its consent, but commits no violence upon it. God accepts its offering, though full of imperfections; but no service is accepted without it, how excellent soever be the manner of it.

View the conscience and thoughts with their self-reflecting faculties, wherein the soul retires into itself, and lies concealed from all eyes but his that made it, judging its own actions, and censuring its estate; viewing its face in its own glass, and correcting the indecencies it discovers there: things of greatest moment and importance are silently transacted in its secret chamber betwixt the soul and God; so remote from the knowledge of all creatures, that neither angels, devils, or men, can know what is doing there, but by uncertain guess, or revelation from God †: here it impleads, condemns, ‡ and acquits itself as at a privy session, with respect of the judgment of the great day; here it meets with the best of comforts, and with the worst of terrors.

Take a survey of its passions and affections, and you will find them admirable: see how they are placed by divine wisdom in the soul, some for defence and safety, others for delight and pleasure. Anger actuates the spirits, and raiseth its courage, enabling it to break through difficulties: fear keeps centinel, watching upon all dangers that approach us: Hope forestals the good, and anticipates the joys of the next life, and thereby supports and strengthens the soul under all the discouragements and pressures of the present life: Love unites us to the chiefest good: "He that dwelleth in love, dwells in God, and God in "him:" Zeal is the dagger which love draws in God's cause and quarrel, to secure itself from sin, and resist its resentments of God's dishonour.

O what a divine spark is the soul of man! well might Christ prefer it in dignity to the whole world.

3. The worth of a soul may be gathered and discerned from its subjective capacity and hability both of grace and glory. It is capable of all the graces of the Spirit, of being filled with the fulness of God, Eph. iii. 19. to live to God here, and with God

* Culverwell.

† 1 Cor. ii. 11.

‡ Rom. ii. 15. 2 Cor. i. 12.

for ever. What excellent graces do adorn some souls? How are all the rooms richly hanged with divine and costly hangings, that God may dwell in them! This makes it like the carved works of the temple, overlaid with pure gold; here is glory upon glory, a new creation upon the old; in the innermost parts of some souls is a spiritual altar erected with this inscription, *Holiness to the Lord*: there the soul offers up itself to God in the sacred flames of love, and herein sacrifices its vile affections, devoting them to destruction, to the glory of its God: here God walks with delight, even a delight beyond what he takes in all the stately structures and magnificent adorned temples in the whole world, Isa. lxvi. 1, 2.

No other soul besides man's is marriageable to Christ, or capable of espousals to the King of glory: they were not designed, and therefore not endued with a capacity for such an honour as this: but such a capacity hath every soul, even the meanest on earth, and such honour have all this saints: others may, but they are betrothed to Christ in this world, 2 Cor. xi. 2. and shall be presented without spot before him in the world to come, Eph. v. 27.

It is now a lovely and excellent creature in its naked natural state, much more beautiful and excellent in its sanctified and gracious state: but what shall we say, or how shall we conceive of it, when all spots of sin are perfectly washed off its beautiful face in heaven, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon it! when its filthy garments are taken away, and the pure robes of perfect holiness, as well as righteousness, superinduced upon this excellent creature! If the imperfect beauty of it, begun in sanctification, enamoured its Saviour, and made him say, "Thou hast "ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one of the "chains of thy neck;" what will its beauty, and his delight in it be in the state of perfect glorification! As we imagine the circles in the heavens to be vastly greater than those we view upon the globe; so must we imagine in the case before us.

4. The preparations God makes for souls in heaven, speak their great worth and value. When you lift up your eyes to heaven, and behold that bespangled azure canopy beset and inlaid with so many golden studs and sparkling gems, you see but the floor or pavement of that place which God hath prepared for some souls. He furnished this world for us before he put us into it; but, as delightful and beautiful as it is, it is no more to be compared with the Father's house in heaven, than the smallest ruined chapel your eyes ever beheld, is to be compared with Solomon's temple, when it stood in all its shining glory.

When you see a stately and magnificent structure built, richest hangings and furniture prepared to adorn it, you conclude some great persons are to come thither: such preparations speak the quality of the guests.

Now heaven, yea, the heaven of heavens, the palace of the great King, the presence-chamber of the Godhead, is prepared, not only by God's decree and Christ's death; but by his ascension thither in our names, and as our forerunner, for all renewed and redeemed souls. John xiv. 2. "In my Father's house "are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told "you: I go to prepare a place for you."

And, where is the place prepared for them, but in his Father's house? The same place, the very same house where the Father, Son and Spirit themselves do dwell: such is the love of Christ to souls, that he will not dwell in one house, and they in another; but, as he speaks, John xii. 26. "Where I am, there shall "my servant also be." There is room enough in the Father's house for Christ and all the souls he redeemed to live and dwell together for evermore. His ascension thither was in the capacity of a common or public person, to take livery and seisin of those many mansions for them, which are to be filled with their inhabitants, as they come thither in their respective times and orders.

5. The great price with which they were redeemed and purchased, speaks their dignity and value. No wise man will purchase a trifle at a great price, much less the most wise God. Now, the redemption of every soul stood in no less than the most precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. "You "know (saith the apostle there) that we were not redeemed "with corruptible things as silver and gold,——but with the "precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish or spot." All the gold and silver in the world was no ransom for one soul; nay, all the blood of the creatures, had it been shed as a sacrifice to the glory of justice, or even the blood which is most dear to us, as being derived from our own; I mean, the blood of our dear-children, even of our first-born, the beginning of our strength, which usually have the strength of affection: I say, none of this could purchase a pardon for the smallest sin that ever any soul committed, much less was it able to purchase the soul itself, Mic. vi. 6, 7. "Thousands of rams, and ten thou-"sand rivers of oil," or our *first-born*, are no ransom to God *for the sin of the soul.* It is only the precious blood of Christ that is a just ransom or counter-price, as it is called, Mat. xx. 28.

Now, who can compute the value of that blood? Such was the worth of the blood of Christ, which, by the communication of properties, is truly stiled the blood of God, that one drop of it is above the estimations of men and angels; and yet, before the soul of the meanest man or woman in the world could be redeemed, every drop of his blood must be shed; for no less than his death could be a price for our souls. Hence then we evidently discern an invaluable worth in souls: A whole kingdom is taxed, when a king is to be ransomed, the delight and darling of God's soul must die, when our souls are to be redeemed. O the worth of souls!

6. This evidences the transcendent dignity and worth of souls, that *eternity is stampt upon their actions*, and theirs only of all the beings in this world. The acts of souls are immortal, as their nature is; whereas the actions of other animals, having neither moral goodness or moral evil in them, pass away as their beings do.

The apostle therefore, in Gal. vi. 7. compares the actions of men in this world to seed sown, and tells us of everlasting fruits we shall reap from them in the next life; they have the same respect to a future account that seed hath to the harvest; "He "that soweth iniquity, shall reap vanity," *i. e.* everlasting disappointment and misery, Prov. xxii. 8. and "they that now sow "in tears, shall then reap in joy," Psal. cxxvi. 5. Every gracious action is the seed of joy, and every sinful action the seed of sorrow; and this makes the great difference betwixt the actions of a rational soul, and those done by beasts: and if it were not so, man would then be wholly swayed by sense and present things, as the beasts are, and all religion would vanish with this distinction of actions.

Our actions are considerable two ways, physically and morally; in the first sense they are transient, in the last permanent: a word is past as soon as spoken, but yet it must and will be recalled and brought into the judgment of the great day, Mat. xii. 36. Whatever therefore a man shall speak, think or do, once spoken, thought, or done, it becomes eternal, and abides for ever. Now, what is it that puts so great a difference betwixt human and brutal actions; but the excellent nature of the reasonable soul? It is this which stamps immortality upon human actions, and is at once a clear proof, both of the immortality, and dignity of the soul of man, above all other creatures in this world.

7. The contentions of both worlds, the strife of heaven and

hell about the soul of man, speaks it a most precious and invaluable treasure.

The soul of man is the prize about which heaven and hell contend: the great design of heaven is to save it, and all the plots of hell to ruin it. Man is a borderer betwixt both kingdoms, he lives here upon the confines of the spiritual and material world; and therefore Scaliger fitly calls him *Utriusque mundi nexus*, one in whom both worlds meet: his body is of the earth, earthly; his soul the off-spring of a Deity, heavenly. It is then no wonder to find such tugging and pulling this way and that way, upward and downward, such sallies from heaven to rescue and save it, such excursions from hell to captivate and ruin it.

The infinite wisdom of God hath laid the plot and design for its salvation by Christ in so great depth of counsel, that the angels of heaven are astonished at it, and desire to pry into it. Christ in pursuance of this eternal project, came from heaven professedly to seek and to save lost souls, Luke xix. 10. He compares himself to a good shepherd, who leaveth the ninety nine to seek one lost sheep, and having found it, brings it home upon his shoulders, rejoicing that he hath found it, Luke xv. 7.

Hell employs all its skill and policy, sets a-work all wiles and stratagems to destroy and ruin it; 1 Pet. v. 8. "Your adversa-"ry, the devil, goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom "he may devour." The strong man armed gets the first possession of the soul, and with all his forces and policies labours to secure it as his property, Luke xi. 21. Christ raises all the spiritual militia, the very *posse cœli*, the powers of heaven, to rescue it, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. And do heaven and earth thus contend, think you, *de lana caprina*, for a thing of nought? No, no, if there were not some singular and peculiar excellency and worth in man's soul, both worlds would never tug and pull at this rate which should win that prize. It was a great argument of the worth and excellency of Homer, that incomparable poet, that seven cities contended for the honour of his nativity.

Ἑπτὰ πόλεις διερίζουσι περὶ ῥίζης Ὁμήρου,
Σμύρνα, Ῥόδος, Κολοφών, Σαλαμὶς, Χίος, Ἄργος, Ἀθῆναι.

Smyrna, Rhodes, Colophon, Salamis, Chius, Argos, and Athens were all at strife about one poor man, who should crown themselves with the honour of his birth: but when heaven and hell shall contend about a soul, certainly it much more speaks the dignity of it, than the contention of seven cities for one Homer.

What are all the wooings, expostulations, and passionate beseechings of Christ's ministers? What are all the convictions of conscience, and the strong impressions made upon the affections? What are all the strokes from heaven upon men, in the way of sin? I say, what are all these but the efforts of heaven to draw souls out of the snares of hell?

And what are the hellish temptations that men feel in their hearts, the alluring objects presented to their eyes, the ensnaring examples that are set round about them, but the attempts of Satan, if possible, to draw the souls of men into the same condemnation and misery with himself?

Would heaven and hell be up in arms, as it were, and strive at this rate for nothing? Thy soul, O man, how vilely soever thou depreciatest and slightest it, is of high esteem, a rich purchase, a creature of nobler rank than thou art aware of. The wise merchant knows the value of gold and diamonds, though ignorant Indians would part with them for glass beads and tinsel toys. And this leads us to

8. The eighth evidence of the invaluable worth of souls, which is the joy in heaven, and the rage in hell, for the gain and loss of the soul of man.

Christ, who came from heaven, and well knew the frame and disposition of the inhabitants of that city, tells us, that "there "is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner "that repenteth," Luke xv. 7, 10. *No sooner is the heart of a sinner darted with conviction, broken with sorrow for sin, and begins to cry, "men and brethren, what shall I do?" but the news is quickly in heaven, and sets all the city of God a rejoicing at it, as is in the chief city of a kingdom when a young prince is born.

We never read that Christ laughed in all his time on earth; but we read that he once rejoiced in spirit, Luke x. 21. And what was the occasion of that his joy, but the success of the gospel in the salvation of the souls of men? Now, certainly it must be some great good that so effects Christ, and all his angels in heaven at the sight of it; the degree of a wise man's joy is according to the value of the object thereof: No man that is wise will rejoice, and feel his heart leap within him for gladness at a small or common thing.

* As often as we do good, so often the angels are glad, and the devils are sad? and as often as we depart from good, so often the devil rejoices, and the angels are defrauded of their joy. *Aug.*

And as there is joy in heaven for the saving, so certainly there is grief and rage in hell for the loss of a soul. No sooner had God, by Paul's ministry, converted one poor Lydia, at Philippi, whither he was called by an immediate express from heaven for that service, but the devil put all the city into an uproar, as if an enemy had landed on their coast; and raised a violent persecution, which quickly drave him thence, Acts xvi. 9, 14, 22.

And, indeed, what are all the fierce and cruel persecutions of God's faithful ministers, but so many efforts of the rage and malice of hell, against them, for plucking souls as so many captives and preys out of his paws? For this he owes them a spight, and will be sure to pay them, if ever he get them at an advantage. But all this joy and grief demonstrates the high and great value of the prize which is won by heaven, and lost by hell.

9. The institution of gospel-ordinances, and the appointment of so many gospel-officers purposely for the saving of souls, is no small evidence of their value and esteem.

No man would light and maintain a lamp fed with golden oil, and keep it burning from age to age, if the work to be done by the light of it were not of a very precious and important nature; what else are the dispensations of the gospel, but lamps burning with golden oil to light souls to heaven? Zech. iv. 2, 3, 4, and 12. compared: A magnificent vision is there presented to the prophet, *viz.* A candlestick of gold with a bowl or cistern upon the top of it, and seven shafts with seven lamps at the ends thereof, all lighted: And that these lamps might have a constant supply of oil, without any accessary human help, there are presented (as growing by the candlestick) two fresh and green olive trees on each side thereof, ver. 3. which do empty out of themselves golden oil, ver. 12. naturally dropping and distilling it into that bowl, and the two pipes thereof to feed the lamps continually. Under this stately emblem you have a lively representation of the spiritual gifts and graces distilled by the Spirit into the ministers of the gospel, for the use and benefit of the church, as you find not only by the angel's exposition of it here, but by the Spirit's allusion to it, and accommodation of it in Rev. xi. 3, 4. See herein what price God puts upon the salvation of souls: Gospel lamps are maintained for their sakes, not with the sweat of ministers brows, or the expence and waste of their spirits, but by the precious gifts and graces of God's Spirit continually dropping into them for the use and service of souls. These ministerial gifts and graces are Christ's ascension-gifts, Eph. iv. 8. "When he ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men;"

and what were the royal gifts of that triumphant day? Why, he "gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, "and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, "for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body "of Christ." It is an allusion to the Roman triumphs, wherein the conqueror did *spargere missilia*, scatter abroad his treasures among the people. It is reported of the palm-tree, saith one, that when it was first planted in Italy, they watered its roots with wine, to make it take the better with the soil: But God waters our souls with what is infinitely more costly than wine, he waters them with the heart-blood of Christ, and the precious gifts and graces of the Spirit; which certainly he would never do, if they were not of great worth in his eyes. O how many excellent ministers, who were, as it is said of John, burning and shining lights in their places and generations, have spent themselves, and how many are there who are willing to spend, and be spent, as Paul was for the salvation of souls! God is at great expences for them, and therefore puts a very high value upon them.

Now all this respects the soul of man, that is the object of all ministerial labours. The soul is the *terminus ultimum ad intra*, the subjecteon which God works, and upon which he spends all those invaluable treasures. 'Tis the soul which he aims at, and principally designs and levels all to, and reckons it not too dear a rate to save them at.

No man will dig for common stones with golden mattocks, the instruments that would be worn out being of far greater value than the thing. This may convince us of what worth our souls are, and at what rates they are set in God's book, that such instruments are sent abroad into the world, and such precious gifts and graces, like golden oil, spent continually for their salvation; "Whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, all are yours," 1 Cor. iii. 22. *i. e.* all set apart for the service and salvation of your souls.

10. The great encouragements and rewards God propounds, and promiseth to them that win souls, speak their worth, and God's great esteem of them.

There cannot be a more acceptable service done to God, than for a man to set himself heartily and diligently to the conversion of souls; so many souls as a man instrumentally saves, so many diadems will God crown him withal in the great day. St. Paul calls his converted Philippians *his joy and his crown*, Phil. iv. 1. and tells the converted Thessalonians, they were his

" crown of rejoicing in the preſence of Jeſus Chriſt at his " coming," 1 Theſſ. ii. 19. There is a full reward aſſured by promiſe to thoſe that labour in this great ſervice, Dan. xii. 3. " And they that be wiſe, ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the " firmament; and they that turn many to righteouſneſs, as the " ſtars for ever and ever." The wiſdom here ſpoken of, I conceive not to be only that whereby a man is made wiſe to the ſalvation of his own ſoul, but whereby he is alſo furniſhed with ſkill for the ſaving of other mens ſouls, according to that, Prov. xi. 30. " He that winneth ſouls is wiſe:" And ſo the latter phraſe is exegetical of it, meaning one and the ſame thing by being wiſe, and turning many into righteouſneſs: And, to put men upon the ſtudy of this wiſdom, he puts a very honourable title upon them, calling them מצדיקי רבים, the *juſtifiers of many*, as in 1 Tim. iv. 16. they are ſaid to ſave others. Here is ſingular honour put upon the very inſtruments employed in this honourable ſervice, and that is not all, but their reward is great hereafter, as well as their honour great at preſent, they " ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament, and the ſtars " for ever and ever." The firmament ſhines like a ſapphire in itſelf, and the ſtars and planets more gloriouſly again; but thoſe that faithfully labour in this work of ſaving ſouls ſhall ſhine in glory for ever and ever, when the firmament ſhall be parchedup as a ſcroll. O what rewards and honours are here to provoke men to the ſtudy of ſaving ſouls! God will richly recompenſe all our pains in this work, if we did but only ſow the ſeed in our days, and another enter into our labours, and water what we ſowed; ſo that neither the firſt hath the comfort of finiſhing the work, nor the laſt the honour of beginning it; but one did ſomewhat towards it in the work of conviction, and the other carried it on to greater maturity and perfection; and ſo neither the one nor the other began and finiſhed the work ſingly, yet both ſhall rejoice in heaven together, John iv. 36.

You ſee what honour God puts upon the very inſtruments employed in this work, even the honour to be ſaviours, under God, of mens ſoul's, James v. 20. and what a full reward of glory, joy, and comfort, they ſhall have in heaven, all which ſpeaks the great value of the ſoul with God. Such encouragements, and ſuch rewards, would never have been propounded, and promiſed, if God had not a ſingular eſtimation of them.

And the more to quicken his inſtruments to all diligence, in this great work, he works upon their fears as well as hopes; threatens them with hell, as well as encourages them with the hopes of heaven; tells them he will require the blood of all

thoſe ſouls that periſh by their negligence: "Their blood (ſaith "he) will I require at the watchman's hands," Ezek. xxxiii. 6. which are rather thunderbolts, than words, ſaith Chryſoſtome. By all which, you ſee, what a weight God lays upon the ſaving, or loſing of ſouls: Such ſevere charges, great encouragements, and terrible threats, had never been propoſed in ſcripture, if the ſouls of men had not been invaluably precious.

11. It is no ſmall evidence of the precious, and invaluable worth of ſouls, that God manifeſts ſo great, and tender care over them, and is ſo much concerned about the evil that befals them.

Among many others, there are two things in which the tender care of God, for the good of ſouls, is manifeſted.

(1.) In his tenderneſs over them in times of diſtreſs, and danger; as a tender father will not leave his ſick child in other hands, but ſits up, and watches by himſelf, and adminiſters the cordials with his own hands; even ſo the great God expreſſeth his care, and tenderneſs. Iſa. lvii. 15. "I dwell in the high "and holy place, with him, alſo, that is of a contrite and humble "ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the "heart of the contrite ones." Behold the condeſcending tenderneſs of the higheſt Majeſty! Is a ſoul ready to faint, and fail, O how ſoon is God with it, with a reviving cordial in his hand! leſt "the ſpirit ſhould fail before him, and the ſoul "which he hath made?" as it is ver. 16. Yea, he put it into Chriſt's commiſſion, "to preach good tidings to the meek, and "to bind up the broken-hearted," Iſa. lxi. 1. and not only inſerts it in Chriſt's commiſſion, but gives the ſame in ſolemn charge to all his inferior meſſengers, whom he employs about them. Iſa. xxxv. 3. "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the "feeble knees; ſay to them that are of a fearful heart, Be "ſtrong, fear not."

(2.) His ſpecial regard to ſouls, is evidenced in his ſevere prohibitions to all others to do nothing that may be an occaſion of ruin to them. He charges it upon all, "That no man "put a ſtumbling-block, or an occaſion to fall in his brother's "way," Rom. xiv. 13. that by the abuſe of our own liberty, "we deſtroy not him for whom Chriſt died," Rom. xiv. 15. And what doth all this ſignify, but the precious, and invaluable worth of ſouls?

12. *Laſtly*, It is not the leaſt evidence of the dignity of men's ſouls, that God hath appointed the whole hoſt of angels to be their guardians, and attendants.

"*Are* they not all ministring spirits sent forth to minister for "them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. i. 14.

Are they not?] It is not a doubtful question, but the strongest way of affirmation; nothing is surer than that they are.

All] Not one of that heavenly company excepted. The highest angel thinks it no disparagement to serve a soul for whom Christ died; well may they all stoop to serve them, when they see Christ, their Lord, hath stooped, even to death, to save them. They are all of them

Ministring spirits.] Λειτουργικα πνευματα, public officers, to whom their tutelage is committed: To them it belongs to attend, serve, protect and relieve them. The greatest barons, and peers, in the kingdom, think it not below them to wait upon the heir apparent to the crown, in his minority; and no less dignity is here stampt by God upon the souls of men, whom he calls

Heirs of salvation.] And in some respect, nearer to Christ, than themselves are; on this account it is, that the angels delight to serve them. Christ's little ones upon earth have their angels, which always behold the face of God in heaven, Mat. xviii. 10. and therefore saith our Lord there, "Take heed you "despise not one of those little ones;" they are greater persons than you are aware of. Nor is it enough that one angel is appointed to wait upon all, or many of them, but many angels, even a whole host of them, are, sometimes, sent to attend upon one of them. As Jacob was going on his way, the angels of God met him; and when he saw them, he said, "This is "God's host," Gen. xxxii. 1, 2.

The same two offices which belong to a nurse, to whom the father commits his child, belong, also, to the angels of heaven, with respect to the children of God, *viz.* to keep them tenderly whilst they are abroad, and bring them home to their Father's house at last. And how clearly doth all this evince, and demonstrate the great dignity, and value of souls? Was it an argument of the grandeur, and magnificence of king Solomon, that he had two hundred men with targets, and three hundred men with shields of beaten gold, for his ordinary guard, every day? And is it not a mark of far greater dignity than ever Solomon had in all his glory, to have hosts of angels attending us? In comparison with one of this guard, Solomon himself was but a worm, in all his magnificence.

And now lay all these arguments together, and see what they will amount to. You have before you no ordinary creature: For, (1.) It was not produced, as other creatures were, by a

mere word of command; but by the deliberation of the great council of heaven. And (2.) Such are the high and noble faculties, and powers found in it, as render it agreeable to, and becoming such a divine Original. Yea, (3.) By reason of these its admirable powers, it becomes a capable subject, both of grace here, and glory hereafter. (4.) Nor is this its capacity in vain; for God hath made glorious preparations for some of them in heaven. (5.) And purchased them for heaven, and heaven for them, at an invaluable price, even the precious blood of Christ. (6.) And stampt immortality upon their actions, as well as natures. (7.) Both worlds contend, and strive for the soul, as a prize of greatest value. (8.) Their conversion to Christ is the triumph of heaven, and rage of hell. (9.) The lamps of gospel-ordinances are maintained over all the reformed Christian world, to light them in their passage to heaven. (10.) Great rewards are propounded to all that shall heartily endeavour the salvation of them. (11.) The care of heaven is exceeding great, and tender over them. And (12.) The heavenly hosts of angels have the charge of them, and reckon it their honour to serve them. These things, duely weighed, bring home the conclusion, with demonstrative clearness, to every man's understanding, *That one soul is of more value than the whole world*; which was the thing to be proved. What remains, is the improvement of this excellent subject, in these following inferences.

Infer. 1. The soul of man appearing to be a creature of such transcendent dignity, and excellency, this truth appears of equal clearness with it; *That it was not made for the body, but the body for it; and therefore it is a vile abuse of the noble, and high born soul, to subject it to the lusts, and enslave it to the drudgery of the inferior, and more ignoble part.*

The very law of nature assigns the most honourable places, and employments, to the most noble, and excellent creatures, and the baser, and inferior, to things of the lowest rank, and quality: The sun, moon, and stars, are placed, by this law, in the heavens; but the *ignis fatuus*, and the glow-worm, in the fens, and ditches. Princes are set upon thrones of glory, the beggars lodged in barns, and stables: and if at any time this order of nature is inverted, and the baser suppress, and perk over the more noble, and honourable beings, it is looked upon as a kind of prodigy, in the civil world. And so Solomon represents it, Eccles. x. 7. "I have seen servants upon horses, "and princes walking as servants upon the earth;" *(i. e.)* I have seen men that are worthy of no better employments than to rub horses heels, in the saddle, with their trappings; and

men who deserve to bear rule, and to govern kingdoms; men, who for their great ability, and integrity, deserved to sit at the helm, and moderate the affairs of kingdoms; these have I seen walking as servants upon the earth; and this he calls an evil under the sun, that is, an *ataxy*, confusion, or disorder in the course of nature.

Now there can never be that difference, and vast odds betwixt one man, and another, as there is betwixt the soul and body of every man: A king upon the throne is not so much above a beggar that cries at our doors for a crust, as the soul is above the body; for the soul of a beggar is of the same species, original, and capacity of happiness, with the soul of the most illustrious prince; and sometimes greater excellencies of mind are found in the lowest rank, and order of men. "Better "ter is a poor, and wise child, than an old, and foolish king," Eccles. iv. 13. but the soul of the meanest person in the world is better than all the bodies in it; and therefore, to make the noble, and the high-born soul a slave, a mere drudge to the vile body, as the apostle calls it, Phil. iii. 21. "The body of this "vileness;" what is it but to set the beggar on horseback, and make the king lacquey after him on foot?

It was a generous resentment that a * Heathen had of the dignity of his own soul, and a very just abhorrence of so vile an abuse of it, when he said, *I am greater, and born to greater things, than that I should be a slave to my body.*

I know there is a debt of duty the soul owes to its own body, and few souls are to be found too careless, or dilatory, in the discharge thereof; where one soul needs the spur in this case, thousands need the curb. Most souls are over-heated with zeal, for the concerns of the flesh, worn out, and spent in its constant drudgery; their whole life is but a *serving of divers lusts and pleasures*, as the apostle speaks, Tit. iii. 3. Imperious lusts are cruel task-masters, they give the soul no rest; the more provision the soul brings in to satisfy them, the more they rage, like fire, by the addition of more fuel. What a sad sight is it, to see a noble, immortal soul *enslaved*, as the apostle's word is, Tit. i. 7. *to wine? to filthy lucre*, to a thousand sorts of vassalage; like a *tapster* in a common *inn*, now running up-stairs, and then down, at every one's knock, and call.

Μη οινῳ πολλῳ δεδουλωμενους.

O what a perpetual hurry, and noise, do thousands of souls

* *Major sum, et ad majora natus, quam ut corporis mei sim mancipium.* Sen.

live in! so that they have no time to retire into themselves, and think for what end, and use, they were created, and sent into this world. All their thoughts, all their cares, all their studies, and labours, are taken up about the perishing, clogging, ensnaring body, which must so shortly fall a prey to the worms. How many millions of poor creatures are there that labour, and toil all their life long, for a poor, bare maintenance of their bodies, and never think they have any other business to do in this world!

And how many, of an higher rank, are charmed by a thick succession of fleshly delights, and pleasures, into a deep oblivion of their eternal concerns! So that their whole life is but one entire diversion from the great business, and proper end of it. James v. 5. "Ye have lived in pleasures on earth," living in them, as the fish doth in the water, its proper element, or the eel in the mud. Sometimes it falls out, at the very close of a vain voluptuous life, when they see all their delights, shrinking away at the approaches, and appearance of death, that they begin to be a little startled at the change, which is about to be made upon them; and to cry, O what shall we do now! Ah poor souls! is that a time to think what you shall do, when you are just stepping into the awful state of eternity? O that this had been thought on in season! but you could find no leisure for one such thought. Now you begin to wish time had been rescued out of the hands of the cares, and pleasures of this life, for better purposes; but it is gone, and never more to be recalled.

Infer. 2. *Is the soul so invaluably precious? Then the salvation of the soul is to be the great care, and business of every man in this life.*

Where one thought is spent about this question, *What shall I eat, drink, and put on?* A thousand should be spent about that question, "What shall I do to be saved?" If a treasure of ten, or twenty thousand pounds were committed to your trust, and charge, and for which (in case of loss) you must be responsible; would not your thoughts, cares, and fears, be working night and day about it, till you are satisfied it is safe, and out of danger? And then your mind would be at rest, but not before. Thy soul, O man, is more worth than the crowns, and treasures of all the princes in the world! If all their exchequers were drained, and all their crown-jewels sold to their full value, they could never make up a half ransom for the soul of the poorest and meanest man. This invaluable treasure is committed to your charge;

if it be lost, you are lost for ever. That which St. Matthew calls the losing of the soul in my text, St. Luke calls *losing himself*; if the soul be lost, the man is lost: The body is but as a boat fastened to the stern of a stately ship, if the ship sink, the boat follows it.

O, therefore, what thoughts, what fears, what cares should exercise the minds of men, day and night, till their precious souls are out of all danger: Methinks the sound of this text should ring a perpetual alarm in the ears of careless sinners, and make them hasten to the insurance-office, as merchants do, who have great adventures in danger at sea. It was counsel given once to a king, and worthy to be pressed upon all, from the king to the beggar, to ruminate these words of Christ one quarter of an hour every day; "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the "whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man "give in exchange for his soul?" Certainly it would make men slacken their pace and cool themselves in their hot, and earnest pursuit of the trifles of this world, and convince them, that they have somewhat else to do of far greater importance.

It was not without great and weighty reason, therefore, that the apostle Peter exhorts to all diligence to make our calling, and election sure, 2 Pet. i. 10. There are two words in this text of extraordinary weight, *Give all diligence*; the word is *study*, the utmost intention of the mind, pondering, and comparing things in the thoughts, valuing reasons for, and objections against the point before us, this is study; and such as calls for all diligence where the subject-matter is (as, to be sure, here it is) of the greatest importance: And what is the subject-matter of all this study, and diligence? Why, it is the most solemn of all works that ever came under the hand of man, to make our calling and election *sure*, firm, stable, or fixed, as a building raised upon a square, and strong foundation; or as a conclusion is sure, when regularly drawn from certain, and indubitable promises: There can never be too much care, too much study, or pains, about that which can never be too well secure.

Many souls never spent one solemn hour in a close and serious debate about this matter; others have taken a great deal of pains about it; they have broken many nights sleep, poured out many prayers, made many a deep search into their own hearts, walked with much conscientious watchfulness, and tenderness, proposed many a serious case of conscience to the most judicious, and skilful ministers, and Christians; and, after all,

the security is not such as fully satisfies: And probably one reason of it may be the great weight wherewith the matters of their salvation lie upon their spirits. O that these soul concerns did bear upon all, as they do upon some! It requires more time, more thoughts, more prayers to make these things sure, than most are aware of.

Infer. 3. *If the soul be so precious, then certainly it is the special care of heaven, that which God looks more particularly after, than any other creature on earth.*

There is an active, vigilant providence, that superintends every creature upon earth; there is not the most despicable, diminutive creature that lives in the world, left without the line of providence: God is therefore said to give them all their meat in due season, and for that end they all wait upon him, Psal. civ. 27. who, as a great and provident house-keeper orders daily convenient provisions for all his family, even to the least, and lowest among them: The smallest insects, and gnats which swarm so thick in the air, and of the usefulness of whose Being it is hard to give an account; yet as the incomparably learned * Dr. More well observes, these all find nourishment in the world, which would be lost if they did not, and are again convenient nourishment themselves to others that prey upon them.

But man is the peculiar, special care of God, and the soul of man much more than the body. Hence Christ fortifies the faith of Christians, against all distrusts of divine providence, even from their excellency above other creatures.

Mat. x. 31. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows;" and Mat. vi. 26. your heavenly Father feeds the fowls of the air, "and are ye not much better than they?" and ver. 30. he clothes the grass of the field, "and shall he not much more "clothe you?" and so the apostle, 1 Cor. ix. 9. "Doth God "take care for oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? "For our sakes, no doubt, this is written." In all which places we have the dignity of man above all animals and vegetables, in respect of the natural excellency of his reasonable soul, but especially the gracious endowments of it, which endear it far more to its Maker; this is the very hinge of the argument, and a firm ground for the believer's faith of God's tender care over both parts, but especially the soul. The body of a believer is God's creature, as well as his soul; but that being of less value, hath not such a degree of care and tenderness expressed

* Antidote, &c. p. 82.

towards it, as the soul hath: the father's care is not so much for the child's cloaths, as it is for the child himself. Besides, the immediate wants and troubles of the soul, which are *idopathetical*, are far more sharp and pinching, than those it suffers upon the body's account, which are but *sympathetical*: and therefore, whenever such an excellent creature, as a sanctified soul, which is in Christ, or a soul designed to be sanctified, which is moving towards Christ, falls under those heavy pressures and distresses, (as it often does) and is ready to fail; let it be assured, its merciful Creator will not fail to relieve, support, revive, and deliver it, as often as it shall fall into those deep distresses.

Hear how his compassionate tenderness is expressed towards distressed souls. Isa. xlix. 15. "Can a woman forget her suck-"ing child, that she should not have compassion on the son of "her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee."

Sooner shall a *woman*, the more tender sex, forget, (not the nurse-child, that only sucks her breast, but) the child, yea, the son of her womb, and that not when grown and placed abroad, but whilst it hangs upon her breast, and draws love from her heart, as well as milk from her breast; than God will forget a soul that fears him. Let gracious souls fortify their faith, therefore, in the Divine care, by considering with what a peculiar eye of estimation and care, God looks upon them above all other creatures in the world: only beware you so eye not the natural, or spiritual excellencies of your souls, as to expect mercy for the sake thereof, as if your souls were worthy for whose sake God should do this: no, no, sin hath nonsuited that plea, all is of free grace, not of debt: but he minds us to what reputation the new creation brings the soul with its God.

Infer. 4. *If the soul of man be so precious, how precious and dear to all believers, should the Redeemer and Saviour of their precious souls be?*

"Unto you therefore that believe, he is precious," saith the apostle, 1 Pet. ii. 7. Though he be yet out of our sight, he should never be one whole hour together out of our hearts and thoughts. 1 Pet. i. 8. "Whom having not seen ye love; whom "though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with "joy unspeakable, and full of glory." "The very name of "Christ," saith † Bernard, "is honey in the mouth, melody "in the ear, and a very jubilee in the heart." The blessed martyr, Mr. Lambert, made this his motto, None but Christ,

† *Mel in ore, melos in aure, jubilum in corde.* Bern.

none but Christ. Molinus was seldom observed to mention his name without dropping eyes. Julius Palmer, in the midst of the flames, moved his scorched lips, and was heard to say, Sweet Jesus, and fell asleep. Paul fastens upon his name, as a bee upon a sweet flower, and mentions it no less than ten times in the compass of ten verses, 1 Cor. i. as if he knew not how to leave it.

There is a twofold preciousness of Christ, one in respect of his essential excellency and glory; in this respect he is glorious, as the only begotten Son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image or character of his person, Heb. i. the other in respect of his relative usefulness, and suitableness to all the needs, and wants of poor sinners; as he is *the Lord our righteousness*, made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. None discern this preciousness of Christ, but those that have been convinced of sin, and have apprehended the wrath to come, the just demerit of sin, and fled for refuge to the hope set before them; and to them he is precious indeed. Consider him as a Saviour from wrath to come, and he will appear the most lovely and desireable in all the world to your souls: he that understands the value of his own soul, the dreadful nature of the wrath of God, the near approaches of this wrath to his own soul, and the astonishing love of Christ, in delivering him from it, by bearing that wrath in his place and room, in his own person; cannot chuse but estimate Christ above ten thousand worlds.

Infer. 5. *How great a trust and charge lieth upon them to whom the care of souls is committed, and from whom an account for other mens, as well as their own souls shall certainly be required?*

Ministers are appointed of God to watch for the souls of their people, and that as men that must give an account, Heb. xiii. 17. The word here translated *watch* *, signifies such watchfulness, as that of shepherds who keep their flocks by night in places infested by wolves, and watch whole nights together for their safety. If a man were a keeper only of sheep and swine, it were no great matter if the wolf now and then carried away one whilst he slept; but ministers have charge of souls, one of which, as Christ assures us in the text, *is more worth than the whole world*. Hear what one speaks upon this point.

* Αγρυπνειν *est noctes in somnis agere, quod solent viri* βουλήφοροι, *pernoxso ilicitudo.*

'* God purchased the church with his own blood: O what 'an argument is here to quicken the negligent! and what an 'argument to condemn those that will not be quickened up to 'their duty by it! O, saith one of the antient doctors, if Christ 'had but committed to my keeping one spoonful of his blood 'in a fragil glass, how curiously should I preserve it, and how 'tender should I be of that glass! If then he have committed to 'me the purchase of that blood, should I not carefully look to 'my charge?

'What, sirs, shall we despise the blood of Christ? shall we 'think it was shed for them that are not worthy our care? O 'then let us hear those arguments of Christ, whenever we feel 'ourselves grow dull and careless. Did I die for them, and will 'thou not look after them? were they worth my blood, and 'are they not worth thy labour? Did I come down from hea-'ven to earth, *to seek and to save that which is lost*, and will 'not thou go to the next door, or street, or village, to seek 'them? How small is thy labour or condescension to mine? 'I debased myself to this, but it is thy honour to be so em-'ployed.'

Let not that man think to be saved by the blood of Christ himself, that makes light of precious souls, who are the purchase of that blood.

And no less charge lieth upon parents, to whom God hath committed the care of their childrens souls; and masters that have the guardianship of the souls, as well as the bodies of their families; the command is laid express upon you, that they sanctify God's sabbaths, Exod. xx. 10. to command your household in the way of the Lord, Gen. xviii. 19.

O parents, consider with yourselves what strong engagements ly upon you to do all you are capable of doing for the salvation of the precious souls of your dear children. Remember, their souls are infinitely of more value than their bodies: that they came into the world under sin and condemnation; that you were the instruments of propagating that sin to them, and bringing them into that misery; that you know their dispositions, and how to suit them better than others can; that the bonds of nature give you singular advantages to prevail, and be successful in your exhortations, beyond what any others have; that you are always with them, and can chuse opportunities which others cannot; that you and they must shortly part, and never meet again, till you meet at the judgment-seat

* Gildas Salvian, p. 260.

of Christ; that it will be an unconceivably dreadful day to see them stand at Christ's left hand among the cursed and condemned, there cursing the day that ever they were born of such ignorant and negligent, such careless and cruel parents, as took no care to instruct, reprove, or exhort them. O who can think, without horror, of the cries and curses of his own child in hell, cast away by the very instrument of his being!

Is this the love you bear them, to betray them to eternal misery? Was there no other provision to be made but for their bodies? Did you think you had fully acquitted your duty, when you had got an estate for them? O that God would effectually touch your hearts with a becoming sense of the value and danger of their souls, and your own too, in the neglect of that great and solemn trust committed to you with respect to them! And you, masters, consider, though God hath set you above, and your servants below, yet are their souls equally precious with your own: they have another Master that expects service from them, as well as you. Do not only allow them time, but give them your exhortations, and commands, not to neglect their own souls, whilst they attend your business: think not your business will prosper the less because it is in the hand of a praying servant; their souls are of greater concernment than any business of yours can be.

Infer. 6. *Are souls so precious? Then certainly the means and instruments of their salvation must be exceeding precious too, and the removal of them a sore judgment.*

The dignity of the subject gives value to the instruments employed about it. It is ordinary mercy for souls to come into such a part of the world, and in such a time as furnisheth them with the best helps for salvation. Ordinances and ministers receive their value, not from their Author, but from their Object: they that have a dignity stamped upon them, by their usefulness to the souls of men, Acts xx. 32. it is the *seed* of life, 1 Pet. i. 23. the regenerating instrument. It is the *bread of life*, and Job xxiii. 12. more than our necessary food. The word is a *light*, shining in the dark world, to direct our souls through all the snares, laid for them, unto glory. It is the soul's cordial in all fainting fits, Psal. cxix. 50. What shall I say of the word and ordinances of God? The sun that shines in heaven to give us light, the fountains, springs, and rivers, that stream for our refreshment, the corn and cattle on the earth, yea, the very air we breathe in, is not so useful, so necessary, so precious to our bodies, as the word is to our souls.

It cannot therefore but be a sore judgment, and a dreadful

token of God's indignation and wrath, to have a reſtraint, or ſcarcity of the means of ſalvation among us; but ſhould there be (which God in mercy prevent) a removal and total loſs of theſe things, wrath would then come upon us to the uttermoſt. What will the condition of precious ſouls be, when the means of ſalvation are cut off from them? when that famine, worſe than of bread and water, is come upon them? Amos viii. 11. When the ark of God (the ſymbol of his preſence) was taken, it is ſaid, 1 Sam iv. 13. "That all the city cried out." When Paul took his leave of Antioch, and told them they ſhould ſee his face no more, how did the poor Chriſtians lament and mourn? as cut at the heart, by that killing word, Acts. xx. 37, 38. It made Chriſt's bowels to yern, and move within him, when he ſaw the multitude ſcattered as ſheep having no ſhepherd, Matth. ix. 36.

Matthew Paris tells us, in the year 1072, when preaching was ſuppreſſed at Rome, letters were framed as coming from hell, wherein the devil gave them thanks for the multitude of ſouls ſent to him that year. But we need no letters from hell, we have a ſad account from heaven, in what a ſad ſtate thoſe ſouls are left, from whom the means of ſalvation are cut off: "Where "no viſion is, the people periſh," Prov. xxix. 18. and Hoſ. iv. 6. "My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge."

It is ſad, when thoſe ſtars that guide ſouls to Chriſt, (as that which the wiſe-men ſaw did) are ſet, and wandering ſtars ſhall ſhine in their places. O if God remove the golden candleſtick out of its place, what but the deſolation and ruin of millions of ſouls muſt follow?

We account it inſufferable cruelty for a man to undertake the piloting of a ſhip, full of paſſengers, who never learnt his compaſs; or an ignorant *Empiric*, to get his living by killing mens bodies; but much more lamentable will the ſtate of ſouls be, if ever they fall, (which God in mercy prevent) into the hands of Popiſh guides, or *blind leaders of the blind*.

Infer. 7. *If the ſoul be of ſo precious a nature, it can never live upon ſuch baſe and vile food as earthly things are.*

The Apoſtle, Phil. iii. 8, 9. calls the things of this world * *Dogs meat*; and judge if that be proper food for ſuch noble, and high-born creatures as our ſouls are. An immaterial being can never live upon material things; they are no bread for ſouls, as the prophet ſpeaks, Iſa. lv. 2. "Why do ye ſpend money

* The Greek word Σκυβαλον, for Κυνοβαλον, ſignifies that which being rejected by us is thrown to dogs.

(*i. e.* Time and pains, thought and cares) "for that which is "not Bread?" Your souls can no more live upon carnal, than your bodies on spiritual things. Earthly things have a double defect in them, by reason whereof they are called things of nought, Amos vi. 13. of no worth or value; they are neither suituable nor durable, and therefore, in the soul's eye, not valuable.

1. They are not suitable. What are corn and wine, gold and silver, pleasures and honours, to the soul? The body, and bodily senses, can find somewhat of refreshment in them; but not the spirit: That which is bread to the body, affords no more nourishment to the soul than wind or ashes, Isa. xliv. 20. "He feedeth of ashes." "‡ Ashes are that light, and dry mat-"ter, into which fewel is reduced by the fire;" the fewel, before it was burnt, had nothing in it fit for nourishment; or if the sap or juice, that was in it, might in any respect be useful that way, yet all that is devoured, and licked up by the fire, and not the least nutriment left in the ashes? And such are all earthly things to the soul of man: "I am the bread of life," saith Christ. A soul can feed, and feast itself upon Christ, and the promises; these are things full of marrow and fatness, substantial, and proper soul-nutriment.

2. As earthly things are no way suitable to the soul, so neither are they durable. The apostle reduceth all earthly things to three heads, "the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, *and* the "pride of life," 1 John ii. 16. he calls them all by the name of that which gives the lustre, and beauty to them, and pronounceth them all fading, transitory vanities, they all pass away: as time, so these things that are measured by time, are *in fluxu continuo*, always going, and at last will be all gone. Now the soul being of an immortal nature, and these things of a perishing nature; it must necessarily, and unavoidably follow, that the soul must over-live them all; and if it will do so, what a dismal case are those souls in, for whom no other provision is made, but that on which it cannot subsist whilst it hath them, no more than the body can upon ashes or wind? and if it could, yet they will shortly fail it, and pass away for ever. So then it is beyond debate, that there lies a plain necessity upon every man to make provision, in time, of things more suitable, and durable than earthly treasures are, or the soul must perish, as to its comfort, to all eternity.

Hence is that weighty counsel of him that came to save them,

‡ *Cinis est crassior illa materia in quam combustum redigitur.*

Luke xii. 33. "Provide yourselves bags that wax not old, a "treasure in heaven, that faileth not," *(i. e.)* a happiness which will last as long as your souls last. Certainly, the moth eaten things of this world are no provision for immortal spirits, and yet multitudes think of no other provision for them, but live as if they had nothing to do in this world but to get an estate.

Alas! what are all these things to the soul? They signify somewhat, indeed, to the body, and that but for a little time; for, after the resurrection, the bodies of the saints become spiritual in qualities, and no more need these material things, than the angels do: It is madness, therefore, to be so intent upon cares for the body, as to neglect the soul; but to ruin the soul, and drown it in perdition, for the sake of these provisions for the flesh, is the height of madness.

Infer. 8. *If the soul be so invaluably precious, then it is a rational, and well advised resolution, and practice, to expose all other things to hazard, yea, to certain loss, for the preservation of the more precious soul.*

It is better our bodies, and all their comforts, should perish, than that our souls should perish for their sakes. Nature teaches us to offer a hand, or arm, to the stock of a sword, to save a blow from the head, or put by a thrust at the heart. It is recorded, to the praise of those three worthies, Dan. iii. 28. "That they yielded their bodies, that they might not serve, nor "worship any God, except their own God." By this rule, all the martyrs of Christ governed themselves, still slighting, and exposing to destruction, their bodies, and estates, to preserve their souls, reckoning to save nothing, by religion, but their souls, and that they had lost nothing, if they could save them; "They loved not their lives unto the death," Rev. xii. 11.

Then do we live like Christians, when the care of our bodies is swallowed up, and subdued by that of our souls, and all creature-loves by the love of Christ. Those blessed souls hated their own bodies, and counted them their enemies, when they would draw them from Christ, and his truths, and plunge their souls into guilt and danger. This was the result of all their debates with the flesh, in the hour of temptation; cannot we live but to the dishonour of Christ, and the ruin of our own souls, by sinful compliance against our consciences; then welcome the worst of deaths, rather than such a life.

Look into the stories of the martyrs, and you shall find this was the rule they still governed themselves by; a dungeon, a stake, a gibbet, any thing, rather than guilt upon the inner-

man: death was welcome, even in its most dreadful form, to escape ruin to their precious, and immortal souls. One kissed the apparitor, that brought him the tidings of death. Another being advised, when he came to the critical point, on which his life depended, to have a care of himself: so I will, said he, I will be as careful as I can of my best self, my soul. These men understood the value, and precious worth of their own souls; certainly, we shall never prove courageous, and constant in sufferings, till we understand the worth of our souls, as they did. Consider and compare these sufferings in a few obvious particulars, and then determine the matter in thine own breast.

(1.) How much easier it is to endure the torments of men in our bodies, than to feel the terrors of God in our consciences. Can the creature strike with an arm like God? O think what it is for the wrath of God to come into a man's bowels like water, and like oil into his bones, as the expression is, Psal. cix. 18. Sure there is no compare betwixt the strokes of God and men.

(2.) The sufferings of the body are but for a moment. When the proconsul told Polycarp that he would tame him with fire, he replied, Your fire shall burn but for the space of an hour, and then it shall be extinguished; but the fire that shall devour the wicked will never be quenched. The sufferings of a moment are nothing to eternal sufferings.

(3.) Sufferings for Christ are usually sweetened and made easy by the consolations of the spirits; but hell torments have no relief, they admit of no ease.

(4.) The life that you shall live in that body, for whose sake you have damned your souls, will not be worth the having; it will be a life without comfort, light or joy; and what is there in life, separate from the joy and comfort of life?

(5.) In a word, if you sacrifice your bodies for God and your souls, freely offer them up in love to Christ and his truth, your souls will joyfully receive and meet them again at the resurrection of the just; but, if your poor souls be now ensnared and destroyed by your fond indulgence to your bodies, you will leave them at death despairing, and meet them at the resurrection howling.

Infer. 9. To conclude, *If the soul be so invaluably precious, how great and irreparable a loss, must the loss of a soul to all eternity be!*

There is a double loss of the soul of man, the one in Adam, which loss is recoverable by Christ; the other by final impeni-

tence, and unbelief, cutting it off from Christ: and this is irreparable, and irrecoverable. Souls lost by Adam's sin, are within the reach of the arms of Christ; but in the shipwreck of personal infidelity, there is no plank to save the soul so cast away: of all losses, this is the most lamentable, yet what more common; O what a shriek doth the unregenerate soul make, when it sees whither it must go, and that there is no remedy! Three cries are dreadful to hear on earth, yet all three are drowned, by a more terrible cry in the other world; the cry of a condemned prisoner at the bar, the cry of drowning seamen, and passengers, in a shipwreck, the cries of soldiers conquered in the field; all these are fearful cries, yet nothing to that of a soul cast away to all eternity, and lost in the depth of hell.

If a man, as Chrysostom well observes, lose an eye, an arm, a hand, or leg, it is a great loss; but yet if one be lost, there is another to help him: for *omnia Deus dedit duplicia*, God hath given us all those members double; *Animam vero unam*, but we have but one soul, and if that be damned, there is not another to be saved.

And it is no small aggravation to this loss, that it was a wilful loss; we had the offers, and means of salvation plentifully afforded us; we were warned of this danger, over and over; we were intreated, and beseeched, upon the knee of importunity, not to throw away our souls, by an obstinate rejection of Christ, and grace; we saw the diligence, and care of others, for the salvation of their souls, some rejoicing in the comfortable assurance of it, and others giving all diligence to make their *calling and election sure:* we knew that our souls were as capable of blessedness, as any of those that are enjoying God in heaven, or panting after that enjoyment on earth; yea, some souls that are now irrecoverably gone, and many others who are going after them, once were, and now are not far from the kingdom of God: they had convictions of sin, a sense of their loss, and miserable state; they began to treat with Christ in prayer, to converse with his ministers, and people, about their condition, and after all this, even when they seemed to have clean escaped the snares of Satan, to be again entangled, and overcome; when even come to the harbour's mouth, to be driven back again, and cast away upon the rocks. O what a loss will this be!

O thou that createdst souls with a capacity to know, love, and enjoy thee for ever; who out of thine unsearchable grace sentest thine own Son out of thy bosom to seek, and save that

which was loſt, pity thoſe poor ſouls that cannot pity themſelves: let mercy yet interpoſe itſelf, betwixt them, and eternal ruin; awaken them out of their pleaſant ſlumber, though it be at the brink of damnation, leſt they periſh, and there be none to deliver them.

Doct. 2. *How precious and invaluable ſoever the ſoul of man is, it may be loſt, and caſt away for ever.*

This propoſition is ſuppoſed, and implied in our Saviour's words in the text, and plainly expreſſed in Mat. vii. 13. "Wide "is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, "and many there be which go in thereat." The way to hell is thronged with paſſengers, it is a beaten road, one draws another along with him, and ſcoffs at thoſe that are afraid to follow; 1 Pet. iv. 4. *Facilis deſcenſus averni;* it is pleaſant ſailing with wind, and tide. Some derive the word *hell* from a verb which ſignifies to carry, or thruſt in; millions go in, but none return thence: millions are gone down already, and millions more are coming after, as faſt as Satan, and their own luſts, can hurry them onward. You read not only of ſingle perſons, but whole nations drowned in this gulph. Pſal. ix. 17. "The wicked "ſhall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." How rare is the converſion of a ſoul in the dark places of the earth, where the ſound of the goſpel is not heard? The devil drives them, in droves, to deſtruction, ſcarce a man reluctating or drawing back *.

And though ſome nations enjoy the ineſtimable privilege of the goſpel of ſalvation, yet multitudes of precious ſouls periſh, notwithſtanding, ſinking into hell daily, as it were, betwixt the merciful arms of a ſaviour ſtretched out to ſave them. The light of ſalvation is riſen upon us, but Satan draws the thick curtains of ignorance, and prejudice, about the multitude, that not a beam of ſaving light can ſhine into their hearts. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. "But if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are "loſt: in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds "of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious "goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto "them."

If our goſpel.] Ours, not by way of inſtitution, as the authors, but by way of diſpenſation, as the miniſters, and preachers of it; and, certainly, it was never preached with that clear-

* The Latin word *Infernus, i. e.* Hell, is derived from a verb ſignifying to thruſt in, becauſe the wicked are ſo hurried and caſt headlong into it, that they can never aſcend out of it.

ness; authority, and efficacy by any mere man, as it was by Paul, and the rest of the apostles; and yet the gospel so powerfully preached, is by him here supposed to

Be hid.] If not as to the general light, and superficial knowledge of it, yet as to its saving influence, and converting efficacy upon their hearts; this never reacheth home to the souls, and spirits of multitudes that hear it, but it is never finally so hidden, except

To them that are lost.] So that all those to whom the converting, and saving power of the gospel never comes, whatever names, and reputations they may have among men, yet this text looks upon them all as a lost generation: They may have as many amiable, homiletical virtues, as sweet, and lovely natures, as clear and piercing eyes, in all other things, as any others; but they are such, however,

Whose eyes the god of this world hath blinded.] *Satan* is here called the god of this world, not properly, but by a mimesis; because he challenges to himself the honour of a god, and hath a world of subjects that obey him; and, to secure their obedience, he blinds them, that they may never see a better way or state, than that he hath drawn them into. Therefore he is called the ruler of the darkness of this world, who rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience. The eye of the soul is the mind, that thinking, considering, and reasoning power of the soul; this is, as the philosophers truly call it, the τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, the leading faculty to all the rest, the guide to all the other faculties, which, in the order of nature, follow this their leader: If this be blinded, the will, which is *caeca potentia*, a blind power in itself, and all the affections blindly following the blind, all must needs fall into the ditch. And this is the case of the far greater part of even the professing world. Let us suppose a number of blind men upon an island, where there are many smooth paths, all leading to the top of a perpendicular cliff, and these blind men going on continually, some in one path, and some in another, but all in some one of those many paths which lead to the brink of their ruin, which they see not; it must needs follow, if they all move forward, the whole number will in a short time, be cast away, the island cleared, and its inhabitants dead, and lost in the bottom of the sea. This is the case of the unregenerate world; they are now upon this habitable spot of earth, environed with the vast ocean of eternity; there are multitudes of paths leading to eternal misery; one man takes this way, and another that, as it is Isa. liii. 6. "We have turned every one to his own way;" one to

the way of pride, another to the way of covetousness, a third to the way of persecution, a fourth to the way of civility, and morality; and so on they go, not once making a stand, or questioning to what end it will bring them, till at last over they go, at death, and we hear no more of them in this world: And thus one generation of sinners follows another, and they that come after approve, and applaud those miserable wretches that went before them. Psal. xlix. 13. and so hell fills, and the world empties its inhabitants daily into it. Now I will make it my work, out of a dear regard to the precious souls of men, and in hope to prevent (which the Lord in mercy grant) the loss, and ruin of some, under whose eyes this discourse shall fall, to note some of the principle ways in which precious souls are lost, and to put such bars into them, as I am capable to put; and, among many more, I will set a mark upon these following twelve paths, wherein millions of souls have been lost, and millions more are confidently, and securely following after, among which, 'tis likely, some are within one step, one day, or hour, to their eternal downfal, and destruction. There is but one way in all the world, to save, and preserve the precious souls of men, but there are many ways to lose, and destroy them: It is here, as it is in our natural birth, and death, but one way into the world, but a multitude out of it. And first,

The first way to hell discovered.

1. And to begin, where, indeed, the ruin of every man doth begin, it will be found, that *an ill education is the high way to destruction;* vice need not be planted; if the gardener neglect to dress, sow, and manure his garden, he need not give the weeds a greater advantage; but if he also scatter the seed of hemlock, docks, and nettles into it, he spoils it, and makes it fit for nothing. Many parents, and those godly too, are guilty of too many neglects, through carelessness, worldly incumbrances, or fond indulgence; and whilst they neglect the season of sowing better seed, the devil takes hold of it; if they will not improve it, he will: If they teach them not to pray, he will teach them to curse, swear and lie; if they put not the bible, or catechism in their hands, he will put obscene ballads into them: And thus the offspring of many godly parents turn into degenerate plants, and prove a generation that know not the God of their fathers. This debauched age can furnish us with too many sad instances hereof. Thus they are spoiled in the bud; simple ignorance in youth, becomes affected, and wilful ignorance in age; blushing sins in children, become impudent in age, and

all this for want of a timely, and prudent preventing care. Others, there are, of the rude and ignorant multitude, who are bred themselves, much like the beasts they daily converse withal; and so they are fitly described, Job xxx. 6, 7. Go into their houses, and you may sooner find in the window, or upon the shelf, a pack of cards, than a bible or a catechism; their beds, and tables, differ little, or not at all, from the stalls, and cribs where beasts lie down, and feed in respect of any worship of God among them; or if, for fashion-sake, a few words be huddled over, in the evening, when their bodies are tired, the man saith something, he scarce knows what, the wife is asleep in one corner, the children in another, and the servants in a third. This is the education multitudes of parents give their children all the week, and when the sabbath comes, the most they learn to know at church, is, where their own seatstands, and that it is necessary to speak with such a neighbour after prayers, about such or such a bargain, or business for the next week.

And others there are, who breed their children as profanely, as these do sottishly; teaching them, by their examples, the newest oaths, that were last minted in hell, and to revile, and scoff all serious godliness, and the sincere professors of it, smiling to hear with what an emphasis they can talk in the dialect of devils, and how wittily they can droll upon godly ministers, and Christians.

Such families are nurseries for hell; and though God, by an extraordinary hand of providence, now and then snatches a soul, by conversion, from among them, as a brand out of the fire; yet, generally, they die as they live, going "to the generation "of their fathers, where they shall never see light," Psal. xlix. 19. I know education, and regeneration, are two things; but I also know one is frequently made the "instrument of working "the other, and that the * savour of what first seasons our "youth (generally) abides to old age," Prov. xxii. 6. We may observe, all the world over, how tenacious men are of that which is πατροπαράδοτον, delivered to them by their parents. O what a cut must it be, to the heart of that father whose son's life shall tell his conscience what a profane son's lips once told his father to his face! "If I have done evil, I have learnt it of "you †." Had they felt more of your prudent correction, it might have prevented their destruction. Prov. xxiii. 14. "Thou "shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from

* *Quo semel est imbuta recens, &c.*
† *Si male feci, a te didici.*

" hell." That this is a common beaten path to hell, is beyond all question; but how to bar it up, and stop the multitudes that are engaged in it to their own ruin, this is the labour, this is the work. I cannot be large, but I will offer a few weighty considerations.

The first way to hell barred.

1. Let all parents consider, what a fearful thing it is to be the instruments of ruining, for ever, those that received their beings instrumentally from them, and to seek whose good they stand obliged, by all the laws of God, and nature.

In vain are all your cares, and studies for their bodies, whilst their souls perish, for want of knowledge. You rejoiced at their birth, but they will have cause to curse the day they were born of you, and say, " Let the day perish wherein I was born, and " the night in which I was conceived." You were sollicitous for their bodies, but careless of their souls; earnest to see them rich, but indifferent whether they were gracious; you neglected to teach them the way of salvation, but the devil did not neglect to teach them the way of sin. You will one day wish you had never been parents, when the doleful cries of your damned children shall ring such notes as these in your ears: ' O cursed father! O cruel, merciless mother! whose examples ' have drawn me after you, into all this misery. You had time ' enough, and motives enough, to have warned me of this ' place, and misery, whilst my heart was tender, and my affec- ' tions pliable: Had it not been as easy to have put a bible, as ' a play-book before me? To have chastised me when I pro- ' voked God, by sin, as when I provoked you about a trifle? ' One word, spoken in season, might have saved my soul; one ' reproof, wisely given, and set on by your example, might ' have preserved me. Had it not been the same pains to have ' asked me, child, what wilt thou do to be saved? As, what ' wilt thou do to live in the world? Or had I but observed any ' serious religion in you, had I but found, or heard my father, ' or mother upon their knees, in prayer, it might have awaken- ' ed me to a consideration of my condtion. In my youth I was ' shame-faced, fearful, credulous, and apt to imitate; had you ' but had wisdom, as other parents have, to have taken hold of ' any of these handles in time, you had rescued my soul from ' hell. Nay, so cruel have you been to your own child, that you ' allowed me no time (if I had had a disposition) for any exercise ' of religion; yea, you have quenched and stifled the sparks of ' convictions, and better inclinations, that sometimes were in

'my heart. O happy had it been, if I had never been born of 'you, or seen your faces.' This must be the result, and issue of your negligence, except God, by some other hand (which is no thanks to you) rescue them from their impending ruin.

2. Let all children, whose unhappy lot it is to be born of, and educated by, carnal and irreligious parents, consider, God hath endued them with reason, and a conscience of their own, to enable them to make a better choice than their parents did, and that there is no taking sanctuary from the wrath of God in their parent's examples. We read, in 1 Kings xiv. 13. of a good Abijah, "in whom was found some good thing towards "the Lord God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam." Here was a child that would not follow his wicked father to hell, though he had both the authority of a father, and of a king over him. "You must honour your parents, but still you must "prefer your God before them ‡." God will never lay it to your account as your sin, but place it to the account of your duty, and comfort, that you refused to follow them in the paths of sin, and destruction. No law of God, no tie of nature binds you to obey their commands, or tread in their steps, farther than they command in God's authority, and name, and walk in his ways. Your temptations, indeed, are strong, and disadvantages great; but the greater will the mercy of your deliverance be: It will be no plea for you, at the judgment-seat, to say, Lord, my father, or mother did so, and so, before me, and I thought I might safely follow them; or thus, and thus, they commanded me, and I thought I was bound, by thy command, to obey them. Therefore look to your own souls, if they are so desperate as to cast away their own. If some children had not minded their own salvation, more than their parents minded it, they had never been saved.

3. Let this consideration work upon the hearts, and bowels of all serious Christians, to pity, and help those that are like to perish under this temptation; and if their parents be so ignorant, that they cannot, or so negligent, that they do not instruct and warn their own children; you that at any time have an opportunity to help them, have compassion on them, and do it. 'Tis true, they are none of your children by nature; but would it not be a singular honour, and comfort to you, if God should make them so by grace? Thousands of children (and, it may be some of you) are more indebted to mere strangers, upon this account, than to their nearest relations; you know not how

‡ *Amandus genitor, sed præponendus Creator.*

much good an occaſional word may do them: All have not abiliſty to be ſo publicly uſeful this way, as a late worthy miniſter of our own nation hath been, who, in compaſſion to the dark, and barbarous corners in Wales, where ignorance, and poverty ſhut up the way of ſalvation to them, at a vaſt expence procured the tranſlation, and printing of the bible in their own tongue, and freely ſent it among them. O you that have the bowels of Chriſtians in you, pity, and help them! What is it, for the ſaving of a precious ſoul, to drop a ſerious exhortation, as you have opportunity, upon them, to beſtow a bible, or ſuitable book upon them? Believe it, theſe little ſums of ſhillings, and pence, ſo beſtowed, will ſtand for more, in the *audit day*, than all the hundreds, and thouſands, other ways expended.

The ſecond way to hell diſcovered.

II. A ſecond way to hell, in which multitudes are found haſtening to their own damnation, is, the way of affected ignorance. The generality of people, even in a land enlightened with the goſpel, are found groſly ignorant of Chriſt, the true, and only way to heaven, and of repentance, and faith, the only way to Chriſt; and thus the people periſh for want of knowledge, Hoſ. iv. 6. if the tree of knowledge had been hedged in from the common people, as it is in popiſh countries; and it had been criminal to find a bible in our houſes, there might have been ſome cloak, and pretence for our ignorance: But to be ſtupidly ignorant of the moſt obvious, plain, and neceſſary truths, and yet bred up among bibles, and miniſters! O how ominous a darkneſs is this, foreboding the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever! For if the hiding of the goſpel from the hearts of men be a token to them that they are loſt ſouls, how much notional light ſoever they may have; much more muſt they be loſt to all intents, from whoſe hearts, and heads too, it is judicially hidden. They that know not God, are in the catalogue of the damned, 2 Theſſ. i. 8. and if this be life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath ſent; then this muſt be death eternal, to be groſly and affectedly ignorant both of God, the end, and Chriſt, the way, by the rule of true oppoſition, John xvii. 3.

Look over the ſeveral countries in the profeſſing world; go into the families of country farmers, day labourers, and poor people, and except here and there a family, or perſon, into whoſe heart God hath graciouſly ſhined; what barbarous, bruſiſh ignorance overſpreads them: They converſe, from morning to night, with beaſts, though they have ſouls, which are

fit companions for angels, and capable of sweet converse with God. The earth hath opened her mouth, and swallowed up all their time, strength, thoughts, and souls, as it did the bodies of Corah, and his company. They know the value of a horse, or cow, but know not the worth of Christ, pardon, or their own souls: They mind daily what work they have to do with their hands, but forget all they have to do upon their knees; their whole care is to pay their fine, or rent to their landlord, but not a thought who shall pay their debts to God. They are so far from putting unnecessary business aside, to make way for the service of God, that God's service is put aside as an unnecessary business, to make way for the world: The world holds them fast till they are asleep, and will be sure to visit them, as soon as their eyes are open, that there may be no vacancy, or door of opportunity left open for a thought of their souls, or another life, to slip in: Or if at any time they think, or speak of these matters, then the world, like Pharaoh, when Israel spake of sacrificing, is sure to speak of more work.

And thus they live, and die, without knowledge; there is no key of knowledge (as it is fitly called, Luke xi. 52.) to open the door of the soul to Christ; he, and his ministers, therefore, must stand without; pity they may, but help they cannot, till knowledge open the door; Satan is ruler of the darkness of this world, Eph. vi. 12. that is, of all blind, and ignorant souls. Ignorance is the chain with which he binds them fast to himself, and till that chain be knocked off, by divine illumination, they cannot be emancipated, and made free of Christ's kingdom; Acts xxvi. 18. "To turn them from darkness to "light, and from the power of Satan to God." Ignorance, indeed, incapacitates a man to commit the unpardonable sin; but what is he the nearer, whilst it disposes him to all other sins which damn, as well as that? By ignorance it is, that all the essays of the gospel, for men's salvation, are frustrated; that naked assent is put in the place of saving faith, morality mistaken for regeneration, a few dead duties laid in the room of Christ, and his righteousness. Indeed it would fill a greater book than this is, to shew the mischievous effects of ignorance, and how many ways it destroys the precious souls of men: but seeing I can speak but little in this place to it, let me bar up this way to hell, if it be possible, by a few serious considerations.

The second way to hell shut up.

1. Let the ignorant consider, God hath created their souls with a capacity of knowing him, and enjoying him, as well as others that are famed in the world for knowledge, and wisdom.

There is a ſpirit in man, and the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them underſtanding. The faculty is in man, but the wiſdom, and knowledge, that enlightens it, from God; as the dial ſhews the hour of the day, when the ſun-beams fall upon it. If, therefore, God be ſought unto, in the uſe of ſuch helps, and means, as you have, even the weakeſt, and dulleſt ſoul, hath a capacity of being made wiſe unto ſalvation. Pſal. xix. 7. "The teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the "ſimple."

Auguſtine tells us of a man ſo weak, and ſimple, that he was commonly reputed a fool, in all the neighbourhood; and yet ſaith, I believe the grace, and fear of God, was in him: For when he heard any ſwear, or take the name of God in vain, he would throw ſtones at them, and ſhew his indignation againſt ſin, by all the ſigns he could make.

2. You that are ſo groſly ignorant in the matter of your ſalvation, are many of you very knowing, prudent, and ſubtil perſons, in the affairs of the world. Luke xvi. 8. "The chil-"dren of this world are wiſer, in their generation, than the chil-"dren of light." Had thoſe parts which you have, been improved, and heightened, by ſtudy, and obſervation about ſpirituals, as they have been about earthly things; you had never been ſo ignorant, or dead-hearted, as you are: You might have been as well verſed in your bibles, as you are in the almanacs you yearly buy, and ſtudy. You might have underſtood the proper ſeaſons of ſalvation, as well as of huſbandry. The great and neceſſary points on which your ſalvation depends, are not ſo many, or ſo abſtruſe, and intricate, but your plain, and inartificial heads might have underſtood them, and that with leſs pains than you have been at for your bodies: What though you cannot comprehend the ſubtilities of ſchoolmen, you may apprehend the eſſentials of Chriſtianity. If you cannot ſtrictly, and ſcholaſtically define faith; what hinders, if your hearts were ſet upon Chriſt, and ſalvation, but you may feel it? Which is more than many learned men do, that can define, and diſpute about it. You cannot put an argument in mood, and figure; no matter, if you can, by comparing your bibles, and hearts together, draw ſavingly, and experimentally, this concluſion; I am in Chriſt, and my ſins are pardoned. You cannot determine whether faith goes before repentance, or repentance before faith; but for all that, you might feel both the one, and the other, upon your own ſouls, which is infinitely better. 'Tis not, therefore, your incapacity, but negligence, and worldlineſs, that is your ruin.

3. How many are there, of your own rank, order, and e-

ducation, all whose external advantages, and helps you have, and all your incumbrances, and discouragements they had, who yet have attained to an excellent degree of saving knowledge, and heavenly wisdom? How often have I heard such spiritual, savoury, experimental truths, in conference, and prayer from plain rustics, such spiritual reasonings about the great concerns of salvation, such judicious, and satisfying resolutions of cases depending upon the sensible, and experimental part of religion, as have humbled, convinced, and shamed me, and made me say *surgunt indocti, &c.* these are the men that will take heaven from the proud, and scornful *ingenioſi* of the world; not many wise, not many learned, and acute. Many knowing, and learned heads, are in hell, and many illiterate, and weak ones gone to heaven; and others in the way thither, who never had better education, stronger parts, or more leisure than yourselves: So that you are without excuse.

To conclude, Would you heartily seek it of God, and would the Spirit (which he hath promised to give them that ask him) become your teacher, how soon would the light of the saving knowledge of God, in the face of Christ shine into your hearts! No matter how ignorant, dull, and weak the scholar be, if God once become the teacher. You are not able to purchase, or want time to read many books; but if once you were sanctified persons, the anointing you would receive from the Father, would teach you all things, 1 John ii. 27. your own hearts would serve you for a commentary upon a great part of the bible; it would make you of a quick understanding, in the fear of the Lord: One drop of your knowledge would be more worth than all learned arts and sciences in the world to you. And is God so far from you, and his illuminating Spirit at such a distance, that there is no hope for you to find him? Is there never a private corner, about your houses, or barns, or in the fields, where you can turn aside, if it be but a quarter of an hour at a time, to pour out your souls to God, and beg the Spirit of him? Miserable wretch! Is thy whole life such a cumber, and clutter of cares, and puzzles about the world, that thou hast no leisure to mind God, soul, or eternity? O doleful state! the Lord in much mercy pity, and awaken thee. Wilt thou not once strive, and struggle to save thy soul? What, perish, as it were, by consent! How great then is that blindness!

The third way to hell discovered.

III. A vast multitude of precious souls are lost for ever, by following the examples, and being carried away with the course

of this world: 'Tis indeed a poor excuse, a silly argument, That the multitude do as we do; yet, as * Junius rightly observes, men's consciences take sanctuary here, and they think themselves safe in it: For thus they reason, *If I do as the generality do, I shall speed no worse than they speed; and certainly God is more merciful than to suffer the greatest part of mankind to perish.* They resolve to follow the beaten road †, let it lead whither it will.

Thus the Ephesians, in their unregenerate state, "walked according to the course of this world," Eph. ii. 2. and the "Corinthians were carried away unto dumb idols, even as they "were led," 1 Cor. xii. 2. just as a drop of water is carried, and moved according to the course, and current of the tide: For look as every drop of water, in the sea, is of one and the same common nature, so are all carnal, and unsanctified persons; and as these waters being collected into one vast body in the ocean, unite their strength, and make a strong current, this way, or that; so doth the whole collective body of the unregenerate world, all the particular drops move as the tide moveth. Hence, they are said "to have received the spirit of this world," 1 Cor. ii. 12. one common spirit, or principle, acts, and rules them all; and therefore they must needs be carried away in the same course. And there are two special considerations that seem to determine them by a kind of necessity, to do as the multitude do; the one is, that they find it the easiest and most commodious way to the flesh, here they meet with quietness, and safety: hereby they are exempt from reproaches, losses, persecutions, and distresses, for conscience sake: Rest is sweet, and here, only, they think to find it. The other is, the prejudice of singularity, and manifold tribulations, they see that little handful, that walk counter to the course of the world, involved in; this startles them from their company, and fixes them where they are. Against such sensible arguments, it is to no more purpose to oppose spiritual considerations, motives drawn from the safety of the soul, or importance of eternity, than it is for a man to turn the tide, or course of a river, with his weak breath.

Add to this, That as one sinner confirms, and fixes another, wedging in each other, as men in a crowd ‡, who must

* What a poor and mean defence have they who think themselves safe from the example of their superiors *Jud. Paral. b.* 2.

† The example of the multitude is a very poor argument. *Senecæ.*

‡ No man errs to his own hurt only, but spreads madness among his neighbours. *Seneca.*

move as it moves; so they make it their business to render all that differ from them, odious and ridiculous: So the apostle notes their practice and Satan's policy in it, 1 Pet. iv. 4. wherein they think it strange, that ye run not with them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you, ξενιζονται; they gaze strangely at them. And that is not all; they not only gaze at them as a strange generation, making them signs, and wonders in Israel, as the prophet speaks; but they defame, revile, and speak evil of them, representing them as a pack of hypocrites, as turbulent, factious, seditious persons, the very pests of the times, and places they live in; and all this, not for doing any evil against them, but only for not doing evil with them, because *they run not with them into the same excess of riot.* Thus the world smiles upon its own, and derides those that are afraid to follow them to hell, by which it sweeps away the multitude with it in the same course.

The third way to hell shut up.

But O! if the Spirit of God would please to set on, and follow home the following considerations to your hearts, you would certainly resolve to take a persecuted path to heaven, though few accompany you therein, rather than swim like dead fishes, with the stream, into the dead sea of eternal misery.

1. Though you go with the consent, and current of the world, yet you go against the express law and prohibition of God: He hath laid his command upon you, "not to be conformed to the "world," Rom. xii. 2. "That you live not the rest of your "time to the lusts of men, but to the will of God," 1 Pet. iv. 2. "That you follow not a multitude to do evil," Exod. xxiii. 2. "That you go not in the way of evil men," Prov. iv. 14. "That you have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of "darkness." All these, and many more, are commands flowing from the highest sovereign authority, obliging your consciences to obedience under the greatest penalties; by them your state must be cast to all eternity in the day of judgment: You may make a pish of the precept, but see if you can do so of the penalty.

2. Other men, in all ages of the world, that were as much concerned in the world as you, and valued their lives, liberties, and estates, as well as you, have yet got out of the croud, disengaged themselves from the way of the multitude, and taken a more solitary, and suffering path, out of a due regard to the safety of their souls: And why should not you love them as well, and care for them as much, as ever any that went before you did? Noah walked with God all alone, when all flesh had

corrupted their ways; Elijah was zealous for the Lord, when he knew of none to ſtand by him, but thought he had been left alone; Job was upright with God, in the land of Uz; Lot ſtood by himſelf, a godly non-conformiſt, in a vile, debauched Sodom; David was a wonder to many; ſo was Jeremiah, and thoſe few with him, for ſigns, and wonders in Iſrael: I demand of your conſciences, what diſcouragements have you, that theſe men had not? Or what encouragements had they, that you have not? Why ſhould not the ſalvation of your ſouls be as precious in your eyes, as theirs was in theirs? Shall you be impoveriſhed, and perſecuted, if you embrace the way of holineſs? So were they. Shall you be reproached, ſcorned, and reviled? So were they. All your diſcouragements were theirs, and all their motives, and encouragements are yours.

3. Is not the way which you have choſen marked out by Chriſt, as the way to deſtruction? And that which you dare not chuſe, and embrace, as the way to life? See the marks he has given you of both, in that one text, Mat. vii. 13, 14. "Enter ye in at the ſtrait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad "is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be "which go in thereat; becauſe ſtrait is the gate, and narrow "is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that "find it." And where now is your encouragement, and hope that God will be more merciful, than to damn ſo great a part of the world? If you will do as the Many do, dream not of ſpeeding as well as that little flock, ſeparated by ſanctification from the multitude, ſhall ſpeed. You have your choice, to be damned with many, or ſaved with few; to take the broad, ſmooth beaten road to hell, or the difficult, ſuffering, ſelf-denying path to heaven. O then make a ſeaſonable neceſſary ſtand, and pauſe a while; conſider your ways, and turn your feet to God's teſtimonies: 'Tis a great, and ſpecial part of your ſalvation, to ſave yourſelves from this untoward generation.

The fourth way of loſing the ſoul opened.

IV. Multitudes of ſouls are daily loſt, by rooted *habits*, and long-continued *cuſtom* in ſin. When men have been long ſettled in an evil way, they are difficultly reclaimed: *Phyſicians* find it hard to cure a *cachexy*, or ill habit of body; but it is far more difficult to cure an ill cuſtom, and habit in ſin. Jer. xiii. 23. "Can the leopard change his ſpots, or the Ethiopian his ſkin? "Then may ye alſo do good, that are accuſtomed to do evil." The ſpots of a *leopard*, and the hue of an *Ethiopian*, are not by way of external, accidental adheſion; if ſo, waſhing would fetch

them off: But they are innate, and contempered, belonging to the constitution, and not to be altered; so are sinful habits, and customs, in the minds of sinners: By this means it becomes a second nature, as it were, and strongly determines the mind to sin. *A teneris assuescere multum est*, It is a great matter to be accustomed to this way, or that, saith Seneca; yea, *Caput rei est, hoc vel illo modo, hominem assuefieri*, 'Tis the very head, or root of the matter, to be so or so accustomed, saith Aristotle. Very much of the strength of sin rises from customary sinning. A brand that hath been once in the fire, easily catches the second time. Every repeated act of sin lesseneth fear and strengtheneth inclination. A horse that took an ill stroke at first breaking, and hath continued many years in it; is very difficultly, if ever, to be brought to a better way. What men have been accustomed to from their child hood, they are tenacious of in their old age. Hence it is, that so few are converted to Christ in their old age. It was recorded for a wonder, in the primitive times, that Marcus Caius Victorius became a Christian in his old age. Time, and usage, fix the roots of sin deep in the soul. Old trees will not bow, as tender plants do. Hence all essays, and attempts to draw men from the course in which they have walked from their youth, are frustraneous and successless. The drunkard, the adulterer, yea, the self-righteous moralist, are by long continued usage, so fixed in their course, and all this while conscience so stupified, by often repeated acts of sin, that it is naturally, as impossible to remove a mountain, as a sinner's will thus confirmed in his wickedness. However, let the trial be made, and the success left to him to whom no length of time, or difficulty, must be objected, or opposed.

The fourth way to hell shut up, by two considerations.

1. Let it be considered, the longer any man hath been engaged in, and accustomed to the way of sin, the more reason and need that man hath speedily, and without delay, to repent, and reform his course; there is yet a possibility of mercy, a season of salvation left: How far soever a soul is gone on towards hell, none can say it is yet too late. When Mr. Bilney, the martyr, heard a minister preaching thus, *O thou old sinner, that hast gone on in a course of sin these fifty, or sixty years; dost thou think that Christ will accept thee now, or take the devil's leavings?* Good God! said he, what preaching of Christ is here! Had such doctrine been preached to me in my troubles, it had been enough utterly to have discouraged me from repentance, and faith. No, no, sinner, it is not yet too late, if at last thy heart be touched with a real sense of thy sin, and danger. The word is plain, Isa. lv.

7. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man "his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and he will "have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly "pardon."

An abundant pardon thou needest; thy sins, by long continued custom and frequent repetitions, have been abundantly aggravated; and an abundant pardon is with God for poor sinners: he will abundantly pardon, but then thou must come up to his terms: thou must not expect pardon or mercy when thy sins have forsaken thee, but upon thy forsaking them; yea, such a forsaking as includes a resolution or decree in thy will to return to them no more, Hos. iv. 8. There must be a change of thy way, and that not from profaneness to civility only, which is but to change one false way to heaven for another, or the dirty road to hell for a cleanlier path on the other side of the hedge; but a total and final forsaking of every way of sin, as to the love and habitual practice of it; yea, and thy thoughts too, as well as thy ways. There must be an internal, as well as an external change upon thee; yea, a positive, as well as a negative change; a turning to the Lord, as well as a turning from sin; and then, how long soever thou hast walked in the road towards hell, there will be time enough, and mercy enough to secure thy returning soul safe to heaven.

2. Canst thou not forbear thy customary sin, upon lesser motives than the salvation of thy soul? And if thou canst, wilt thou not much more do it for the saving of thy precious, immortal soul? Suppose there were but a pecuniary mulct, of an hundred pounds, to be certainly levied upon thy estate for every oath thou swearest, or every time thou art drunk, wouldst thou not rather chuse reformation than beggary? And is not the loss of thy soul a penalty infinitely heavier than a little money? But, as the wise Heathen * observed, *Ea sola emi putamus, pro quibus pecuniam solvimus; ea gratuita vocamus pro quibus nos ipsos impendimus*: We reckon those things only to be bought, which we part with money for; and that we have those things gratis, for which we pay ourselves. Is nothing cheap in our eyes but our selves, our souls! do we call that *gratis*, that will cost us so dear? Darius threw away his massy crown when he fled before Alexander, that it might not hinder him in his flight. Sure

* These things seem cheap to us, which cost very dear, and which we could not purchase, though we should give our house for them. *Sen. Ep.* 42.

your souls are more worth than your money, and all the enjoyments you have in this world. It hath been an antient custom among the citizens of Antioch, to wash themselves in the baths; but the king forbidding it, they all presently forbore, for fear of his displeasure: whereupon Chrysostome convinced them of the vanity of that plea for customary sinning. "You see, (saith he), "how soon fear can break off an old custom; and shall not the "fear of God be as powerful to over-master it in us, as the "fear of man *?" O friends, believe it, it "is better for you "to cut off a right hand, or pluck out a right eye, than having "two hands, or eyes to be cast into hell, where the worm dieth "not, and the fire is not quenched."

The fifth way of losing the soul opened.

V. The fifth way, by which an innumerable multitude of souls are eternally lost, is by the baits of sensual, sinful pleasures.

Some customary sins have little, or no pleasure in them; as swearing, malice, &c. but others allure, and entice the soul, by the sensual delight that is in them: this is the bait with which multitudes are enticed, ensnared, and ruined to all eternity. It is a true, and grave observation of the philosopher †, "That we are impelled, as it were, to that which is evil, by "the alluring blandishments of pleasure." This was the first bait by which Satan caught the souls of our first parents, in innocency. Gen. iii. 6. "The tree was pleasant to the eye." Pleasure quickens the principles of sin in us, and enflames the desires of the heart after it. Every pleasant sin hath a world of customers, and, cost what it will, they resolve to have it. I have read of a certain fruit, which the Spaniards found in the Indies, which was exceeding pleasant to the taste; but nature had so fenced it, and double-guarded it with sharp and dangerous thorns, that it was very difficult to come at it: they tore their cloaths, yea, their flesh, to get it; and therefore called the fruit, *Comfits in hell.* Such are all the pleasures of sin, *comfits in hell;* damnation is the price of them, and yet the sensitive appetite is so outragious and mad after them, that at the price of their souls, they will have them. Thus the wicked are described, Job xxi. 13. "They spend their days in wealth, and "in a moment go down to the grave:" That is, their whole stock of time is spent in cares and labours to get wealth, and when they have gotten it, the rest of their life is spent in those

* Ορας οτι ενδω φοβος ευκολως λυεται συνηθεια, &c. Hom. 14.

† *Voluptatum blanditiis deliniti, ad ea gerenda omnia quae præpa sunt impellimur.* Arist. *lib.* 2. *Eth. c.* 3.

sensual pleasures that wealth brings in, or in making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it. The rich man, in the parable, fared deliciously every day, Luke xvi. where his voluptuous life is described, and in that description, the occasion of his damnation is insinuated. In a pampered and indulged body, is usually found a neglected, and starved soul. But how shall the ruin of souls this way be prevented?

The fifth way to hell shut up, by three considerations.

1. Consider how the mortality of Heathens hath bridled their sensual lusts and appetites, and caused them, with a generous disdain, to repel those brutish pleasures, as things below a man. "What more foolish, what more base," saith Seneca*, "than "to patch up the good of a reasonable soul out of things unreasonable?" "That is the pleasure worthy of a man, not to "glut his body, nor to irritate those lusts in whose quietness is "our safety †." This is the constant doctrine of all the Stoicks.

O what a shame is it, to hear Heathenism out-brave Christianity! and principles of mere Morality enable men to live more soberly, temperately, and abstemiously, than those who enjoy the greatest pattern, and highest motives, in the Christian religion are found to do? 'Thou embracest pleasure, saith the 'Heathen, but I bridle it; thou enjoyest it, I only use it; thou 'thinkest it thy chief good, I esteem it not so much as good; 'thou dost all for pleasure's sake, but I nothing at all on that 'account.' These, therefore, shall be your judges.

2. Always remember, sensual pleasures are but the baits with which Satan angles for the precious soul; there is a fatal hook under them. O if men were but aware of this, they would never purchase pleasure at so dear a rate. "Stolen waters are "sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant; but he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in "the depth of hell," Prov. ix. 17, 18. Pliny tells us that the mermaids have most enchanting, charming voices, and frequent pleasant, green meadows, but heaps of dead mens bones are always found where they haunt; that which tickles the fancy stabs the soul. If the pain, (as Anacreon well observes) were before the pleasure, no man would be tempted by it; but the pleasure being first, and sensible, and the torment coming after, and, as

* *Quid stultius turpiusve quam bonum rationalis animi, ex irrationalibus nectere?* Sen. Ep. 92.

† *Illa est voluptas, et homine et viro digna, non implere corpus, et saginare, nec cupiditas irritare, quarum tutissima est quies.* De Benef. lib. 7. c. 11.

yet invisible, this allures so many to destruction. "At last it "bitteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder," Prov. xxiii. 32. If sin did sting and bite at first, none would touch it; but it tickles at first, and wounds afterward. O what man, that is in his wits, would purchase eternal torments for the sensual, brutish pleasures of a moment! † The pleasures of sin bewitch the affections, blind the judgment, stupify the heart, so that sober and impartial judgment finds no place. The heart is enticed, the lusts are enraged; cost what it will, sinners will gratify their lusts.

3. If you are for pleasure, certainly you are out of the way to it, who seek it in the fulfilling of your lusts. If your hearts were once sanctified, and brought under the government of the Spirit, you would quickly find a far more excellent pleasure in the crucifying of your lusts, than now you seek in the gratification and fulfilling of them. Rom. viii. 13. "If ye, thro' the "Spirit, mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live;" *i. e.* ye shall live the most joyful, peaceful, and comfortable life of all persons in the world, a life of highest delight, and true pleasure; for so far as your lusts are mortified, the vigorous, healthful frame, and due temper of your soul is restored, and your evidences for heaven cleared; both which are the springs of all spiritual delight and pleasure. Can any creature-enjoyment, or any beastly lust, afford a pleasure like this? Do not you find the life you live, in sinful pleasures, quite beneath the dignity of a man? and are they not followed with bitter after-reckonings, gripes, and flashes of conscience: *Even in the midst of laughter the heart is sad, and the end of that mirth is heaviness:* O ponder seriously what a trifle it is you sell your precious souls for! Is it not a goodly price you value them at? the fugitive, empty, beastly pleasures of a moment, for the torments of eternity.

The sixth way of losing the soul, opened.

VI. There are also innumerable souls lost for ever, by the distracting cares of this world, which eat up all their time, thoughts, and studies; so that there is no room for Christ, or one serious hour about salvation. It is too true an observation, which Sir Walter Ralegh makes upon the common mechanics, and poor labourers, their bodies are the anvils of pain, and their souls the hives of unnumbered cares and sorrows, whilst the voluptuous and rich spend their time and studies in purveying

† *Breve est quod delectat, eternum quod cruciat; i. e.* The pleasure is short-lived, but the torment is perpetual.

for new pleasures, and filling their heads with projects of that nature. The poorer sort have their heads and hearts filled, day and night, with anxious thoughts and cares, how to get bread, pay their rents or debts, and struggle through the miserable necessities that pinch them on every side; many children, it may be, to provide for, and little or nothing out of which to make it: here is brick that must be made, and no straw to make it of: he borrows here, to pay there: debts increase, and abilities decrease; he toils his body all the day, and when his tired carcass calls for rest, to enable him for new work to-morrow; the cares of the world invade him on his bed, and keep him sighing or musing there, when, poor man! he had load enough before for one.

And now what room is there left for salvation-work? or how can any spiritual seed, that is cast into such a brake of thorns, prosper? "The cares of this life, (saith Christ) spring up, and "choak it," Mark iv. 19. Tell not them of heaven and Christ, they must have bread; talk not to them of the necessity, or comfort of a pardon, they must pay their debts to men. O the confused buz and clutter, that these thoughts and cares make in their head! so that no other voice can be heard. And thus multitudes spend their whole lives in a miserable servitude in this world, and by that are cast upon a more miserable and restless state for ever, in the world to come; one hell here, and another hereafter. And what shall be done for them? Is there no way for their deliverance? O that God would direct, and bless the following considerations to them, if it may be expected they may atany time get through the brake in which they are involved, and find them at leisure to bethink themselves!

The sixth way to hell shut up, by five considerations.

1. Bethink thyself, poor soul! as much as thou art involved and plunged in the necessities and distracting cares of this life; others, many others, as poor and necessitous, and every way as much embroiled in the cares of the world as you are, have minded their souls, and taken all care and pains for their salvation, notwithstanding: yea, though millions of your rank and order are destroyed by the snares of the devil, yet God hath a very great number, indeed the greatest of any rank of men, among those that are low, poor, and necessitous in the world. The church is called the "congregation of the poor," Psal. lxxiv. 20. because it consisteth mostly of men and women of the lowest and most despicable condition in this world; they are all poor in spirit, and most of them poor in purse. "Hearken, "my beloved brethren, (saith James) hath not God chosen the

" poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom ?" James ii. 5.

Now, if others, many others, as much entangled in the neceſſities, cares, and troubles of the world, as you, have yet ſtruggled through all thoſe difficulties and diſcouragements to heaven; why ſhould you not ſtrive for Chriſt and ſalvation as well as they? your ſouls are as valuable as theirs, and their diſcouragements and hindrances as great and as many as yours.

2. Conſider, your poor and neceſſitous condition in the world, hath ſomething in it of motive and advantage, to excite and quicken you to a greater diligence for ſalvation, than is found in a more full, eaſy, and proſperous ſtate; for God hath hereby imbittered this world to you, and made you drink deeper of the troubles of it than other men: they have the honey, and you the gall; they have the flower, and you the bran; but then, as you have not the pleaſures, ſo you have not the ſnares of a proſperous condition; and your daily troubles, cares and labours in it, do even prompt you to ſeek reſt in heaven, which you cannot find on earth. Can you think you were made for a worſe condition than the beaſts? What, to have two hells! one here, and another hereafter? Surely, as low, miſerable, and deſpicable as you are, you are capable of as much happineſs as any of the nobles of the world; and, in your low and afflicted condition, ſtand nearer to the door of hope, than they do. Ah! methinks theſe thoughts do even put themſelves upon you, when your ſpirits are overloaded with the cares, and your bodies tired with the labours of this life. Is this the life of troubles I muſt expect on earth? Hath God denied me the pleaſures of this world? O then let it be my care, my ſtudy, my buſineſs to make ſure of Chriſt, to win heaven, that I may not be miſerable in both worlds. How can you avoid ſuch thoughts, or put by ſuch meditations, which your very ſtation and condition even forceth upon you?

3. Conſider how all the troubles in this world would be ſweetened, and all your burdens lightened, if once your ſouls were in Chriſt, and in covenant with God. O what heart's eaſe would faith give you! what ſweet relief would you find in prayer! Theſe things, like the opening of a vein, or tumour when ripe, would ſuddenly cool, relieve, and eaſe your ſpirits; could you but go to God as a Father, and pour out your hearts before him, and caſt all your cares and burdens, wants and ſorrows upon him: you would find a ſpeedy out-let to your troubles, and an in-let to all peace, all comforts, and all refreſhments; ſuch as all the riches, honours, and fulneſs of this

world cannot give: you would then find Providence engage itself for your supply, and issue all your troubles to your advantage; you would suck the breasts of those promises in the margin *, and say, all the dainties in the world cannot make you such another feast; you would then see your bread, your cloaths, and all provisions for you and yours, in God's promises, when you are brought to an exigence, and would certainly find performances, as well as promises, all along the course of your life.

4. Say not you have no time to mind another world: God hath not put any of you under such an unhappy necessity; you have one whole day every week, allowed you by God and man, for your souls; you have some spare time every day, which you know you spend worse than in heavenly thoughts and exercises; yea, most callings are such as will admit of spiritual exercises of thoughts, even when your hands are exercised in the affairs of this life: besides, there are none of you but have, and must have daily some relaxations and rest from business; and if your hearts were spiritual, and set upon heaven, you would find more time than you think on, without prejudice to your callings, yea, to the great furtherance of them, to spend with God. I can tell you when, and where I have found poor servants, hard at work for salvation, labouring for Christ, some in the fields, others in barns, and stables, where they could find any privacy to pour out their souls to God in prayer. As lovers will make hard shifts to converse together, so will the soul that is devoted to God, and in earnest for heaven; and though your opportunities be not so large, they may be as sweet, as successful, and to be sure sincere, as those whose condition affords them more time, and greater external conveniencies than you enjoy: more business is sometimes dispatched in a quarter of an hour in prayer, yea, let me say, in a few hearty ejaculations of soul to God, in a few minutes, than in many long and elaborate duties. If thou cast in thy two mites of time into the treasury of prayer, having no more, thou mayest, as Christ said of the poor widow, *give more than those that cast in of their great abundance of time and talents.*

5. Lastly, Consider, Jesus Christ is no respecter of persons, the poorest and vilest on earth, are as welcome to him as the greatest. He chose a poor and mean condition in this world

* Heb. xiii. 5. Isa. xli. 17. Psal. xxxiv. 9, 10. Psal. xci. 15. Rom. viii. 28.

himself, conversed mostly among the poor, never refused any because of his poverty: "God accepteth not the persons of "princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor: for they "are all the work of his hands," Job xxxiv. 19. and that, both in respect of their natural constitution, as men, and their civil conditions, as rich or poor men. Riches and poverty make a great difference in the respects of men, but none at all with God. If thou be one of God's poor, he will accept, love, and honour thee above the greatest (if graceless) person in the world. Poverty is no bar to Christ, or heaven, though it be to the respects of men, and pleasures of this life. Away, then, with all vain pretences against a life of godliness, from the meanness of your outward condition; heaven was not made for the rich, and hell only for the poor: no, no; how hard soever you find the way thither, I am sure Christ saith, *It is hard for a rich man to enter into that kingdom.*

The seventh way of losing the soul, discovered.

VII. The seventh beaten path to destruction, is by groundless presumption; *praesumendo sperant, et sperando pereunt*, by presumption they have hope, and by that hope they perish.

There are divers objects of presumption, amongst which, these three are most usual, and most fatal, *viz.* that they have,

1. That grace which they have not.
2. That mercy in God they will not find.
3. That time before them which will fail them.

1. Many presume they have that grace in them, which God knoweth they have not: So did Laodicea, Rev. iii. 17. "Thou "sayest, I am rich, and have need of nothing, and knowest "not that thou art wretched, and miserable, poor, blind, and "naked." Here is a dangerous conspiracy betwixt a cunning devil, and an ignorant, proud heart, to ruin the soul for ever; they stamp their common grace for special; they put the old creature by a general profession, into the new creature's habit, and lay a confident claim to all the privileges of the children of God.

2. They presume upon such mercy in God, as they will never find; they expect pardoning, and saving mercy out of Christ, in an unregenerate state, when there is not one drop of mercy dispensed in any other way. The whole oeconomy of grace is managed by the Mediator, Jude, verse 21. all saving mercies come through him, upon all that are in him, and upon no others. God is, indeed, a merciful God, and yet presumptuous sinners will find judgment without mercy, because they are not found in the proper way, and method of mercy. Thou-

hands, and ten thousands carve out, and dispose the mercy of God at their own pleasure, write their own pardons, in what terms they think fit, and if they had God's seal to confirm, and ratify them, it were all well: but, alas! it is but a night-vision, a dream of their own brain.

3. But especially, men presume upon time enough for repentance hereafter: they question not but there are as fit, and as fair opportunities of salvation to come, as are already past; and in this snare of the devil, thousands are taken, in the very prime, and vigour of their youth: that age is voluptuous, and loves not to be interrupted with severe, and serious thoughts, and courses; and here is a salvo fitted exactly to suit their inclination, and quiet them in their way, that they may pursue their lusts without interruption.

I cannot follow the sin of presumption, at present, in all these its courses, and ways; and therefore will apply myself to the case last mentioned, which is so common to the world.

The seventh way to destruction shut up by five weighty considerations.

1. I would beg all those young, voluptuous sinners, whose feet are fast held in the snare of this temptation, seriously to bethink themselves, whether they are not old enough to be damned, whilst they judge themselves too young to be seriously godly. There are multitudes in hell of your age, and size; you may find graves in the church-yard, of your own length, and, skulls of your own size: men will not spare a nest of young snakes, because they are little. If you die christless, and unregenerate, 'tis the same thing, whether you be old, or young; there is abundance of young spray, as well as old logs, burning in the flames of hell.

2. If you knew the weight and difficulty of salvation work, you would never think you could begin too soon. Religion is a business which will take up all your time; many have repented they began so late, none that they began so soon *. Say not, *the penitent thief found mercy at the last hour*, for his conversion was extraordinary, and we must not hope for miracles: besides, he could never encourage himself in sin, with the hope, and expectation of such a miraculous conversion; he was the only example of a sinner that was ever so recovered, in scripture, and this was recorded, not to nourish presumption, but to prevent despair. If ten thousand persons died of the plague, and one,

* I repent, O Lord, that I loved thee too late. Aug.

only, of the whole number infected with it eſcaped, it is no great encouragement that you ſhall make the ſecond. O think, and think again, how many thouſands, now on earth, have been labouring, and ſtriving, forty or fifty years together, *to make their calling and election ſure;* and yet, to this day, it is not ſo ſure as they would have it: they are afraid, after all, time will fail them for finiſhing, and you think it is too early for beginning ſo great a work.

3. Others have begun ſooner than you, and finiſhed the great, and main work, before you have done any thing. Abijah was very young, ſcarce got out of his childhood, "when the grace of "God was found in him," 1 Kings xiv. 13. The fear of God was in Obadiah, when but a youth, 1 Kings xviii. 12. Timothy was not only a Chriſtian, but a preacher of the goſpel, "in the mor-"ning of his life," 2 Tim. iii. 15. What have you to plead for yourſelves, which they had not? Or what arguments, and motives to Godlineſs had they which you have not? You ſhall be judged *per pares*, by thoſe of your own age, and ſize; their ſerioufneſs ſhall condemn your vanity.

4 The morning of your life is the flower of your time, the freſheſt, and fitteſt of all your life for your great work; now your hearts are tender, and impreſſive, your affections flowing, and tractable, your heads clear of diſtracting cares, and hurries of buſineſs, which come on, afterwards, in thick ſucceſſions: "Remember, now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, whilſt "the evil days come not," Eccleſ. xii. 1. 2. If a man has an important buſineſs to do, he will take the morning for it, knowing if that be ſlipped, a crowd, and hurry of buſineſs will come on afterwards, to diſtract, and hinder him. I preſume, if all the converts in the world were examined in this point, it would be found, that at leaſt ten to one were wrought upon in their youth; that is the moulding age.

5. And if this proper hopeful ſeaſon be elapſed, it is very unlikely that ever you be wrought upon afterwards: how thin, and rare in the world, are the inſtances, and examples of converſion, in old age! long-continued cuſtoms in ſin, harden the heart, fix the will, and root the habits of vice ſo deep in the ſoul, that there is no altering of them; your ears then are ſo accuſtomed to the ſounds of the word, that *Chriſt* and *ſin*, *heaven* and *hell*, *ſoul* and *eternity*, have loſt their awful ſound, and efficacy with you. But it is a queſtion only to be decided by the event, Whether ever you ſhall attain to the years of your fathers. It is not the ſprightly vigour of your youth that can ſecure you from death. What a madneſs, then, is it, to put your ſouls, and e-

ternal happineſs, upon ſuch a blind adventure? What if your preſumption of ſo many fair, and proper opportunities hereafter, fail you, as it hath failed millions, who had as rational, and hopeful a proſpect of them as you can have; where are you then? And if you ſhould have more time, and means, than you do preſume upon, are you ſure you hearts will be as flexible, and impreſſive, as now they are? O beware of this ſin of vain preſumption, to which the generality of the damned owe their everlaſting ruin!

The eighth way of loſing the ſoul, opened.

VIII. The eighth way of ruining the precious ſoul, is, by drinking in the principles of Atheiſm, and living without God in the world.

Atheiſm ſtabs the ſoul to death at one ſtroke, and puts it quite out of the way of ſalvation; other ſinners are worſe than beaſts, but Atheiſts are worſe than devils, for they believe, and tremble; theſe baniſh God out of their thoughts, and, what they can, out of the world, living as *without God in the world*, Eph. ii. 12. It is a ſin that quencheth all religion in the ſoul. He that aſſents not to the being of a God, deſtroys the foundation of all religious worſhip; he cannot fear, love, or obey him, whoſe being he believes not: this ſin ſtrikes at the life of God, and deſtroys the life of the ſoul.

Some are Atheiſts in opinion, but multitudes are ſo in practice: "The fool hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God," Pſal. xiv. 1. though he hath engraven his name upon every creature, and written it upon the table of their own hearts; yet they will not read it: or if they have a ſlight, fluctuating notion, or a ſecret ſuſpicion of a Deity, yet they neither acknowledge his preſence, nor his providence. *Fingunt Deum talem qui nec videt, nec punit, i. e.* They make ſuch a God who neither ſees nor puniſhes. They ſay, "How doth God know? Can he judge "through the dark clouds? Thick clouds are a covering to "him, that he ſeeth not," Job xxii. 14.

Others profeſs to believe his being, but their lives daily give their lips the lie; for they give no evidence in practice, of his fear, love or dependance on him: if they believe his being, they plainly ſhew they value not his favour, delight not in his preſence, love not his ways, or people; but lie down and riſe, eat and drink, live and die without the worſhip, or acknowledgment of him, except ſo much as the law of the country, or cuſtom of the place extorts from them. Theſe dregs of time produce abundance of Atheiſts, of both ſorts; many ridicule, and hiſs religion out of all companies into which they come,

and others live down all sense of religion; they customarily attend, indeed, on the external duties of it, hear the word; but when the greatest, and most important duties are urged upon them, their inward thought is, This is the preacher's calling, and the man must say something to fill up his hour, and get his living. If they dare not put their thoughts into words, and call the gospel *Fabula Christi*, the fable of Christ, as a wicked Pope once did; or say of hell, and the dreadful sufferings of the damned, as Galderinus the Jesuit did, *Tunc credam cum illuc venero*; I will believe it when I see it: yet their hearts, and lives, are of the same complexion with these men's words: they do not heartily assent to the truth of the gospel which they hear, and though bare assent would not save them, yet their assent, or non-assent, will certainly damn them, except the Lord heal their understandings, and hearts, by the light and life of religion. To this last sort I shall offer a few things.

The eight way to bolt shut up by six weighty considerations.

1. You that attend upon the ordinances; but believe them no more than so many devised fables, nor heartily assent to the truth of what you hear; know assuredly, that the word shall never do your souls good, it can never come to your hearts and affections in its regenerating and sanctifying efficacy, whilst it is stopt and obstructed in your understandings in the acts of assent. And thus you may sit down under the best ordinances all your lives, and be no more the better for them, than the rocks are for the showers of rain that fall upon them; Heb. iv. 2. "The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed "with faith in them that heard it." This is Satan's chief strength and fastness, wherein he trusteth; he fears no argument, whilst he can maintain his post; the devil hath no surer prisoner than the Atheist; there's no escaping out of his possession and power, whilst this bolt of unbelief is shut home in the mind or understanding. An unbelieved truth never converted or saved one soul from the beginning of the world, nor never shall to the end of it. Those bodies that have the *Bealema*, or dog-appetite, whatever they eat, it affords them no nourishment or satisfaction, they thrive not with the best fare: just so it is with your souls, no duties, no ordinances can possibly do them good; as in argumentation, no conclusion, be it never so regularly drawn, and strongly inferred, is of any force to him that denies principles.

2. If you assent not to the truth of the gospel, you not only make God speak to your souls in vain, which is fatal to them; but you also make God a liar, which is the greatest affront a

creature can put upon his Maker; 1 John v. 10. "He that be-
"lieveth not God, hath made him a liar." Vile duſt, dareſt thou riſe up againſt the God that made thee, and give him the lie? An affront which thy fellow creature cannot put up, or bear at thy hands. Dareſt thou at once ſtab his honour, and thy own ſoul? Are not the things that thou lookeſt on as *romances* and golden dreams, a mere artifice, neatly contrived to cheat and awe the world? Are they not all built upon the veracity of God, which is the firmeſt foundation and greateſt ſecurity in the world? Hath he not intermingled, for our ſatisfaction, not only frequent aſſertions, but his aſſeverations and oath to put all beyond doubt? and yet dare any of you lift up your ignorant blind underſtandings againſt all this, and give him the lie? Surely the wrath of God ſhall ſmoke againſt every ſoul of man that doth ſo, and his own bitter, lamentable, doleful experience ſhall be his conviction ſhortly, except he repent.

3. Dare any of you give the thoughts of your hearts as certain concluſions under your hands, and ſtand by them to the laſt, and venture all upon them.

Wretched Atheiſt! bethink thy ſelf, pauſe a while, examine thine own breaſt; whatever thy vile atheiſtical thoughts ſometimes are, is there not at other times a fear of the contrary? A jealouſy that all theſe things which thou derideſt and ſporteſt thy wicked fancy with, may, and will prove true at laſt? When thou readeſt, or heareſt that text, John iii. 18. "He that be-
"lieveth not is condemned already;" his mittimus is already made for hell: doth not thy conſcience give thee a ſecret gird, like a ſtitch in thy ſide? Dare you venture all upon this iſſue, that if thoſe things you find in the word be true, you will ſtand to the hazard of them? If that be a truth, Mark xvi. 16. "He that
"believeth not ſhall be damned," you will be content to be damned? Or if, Rom. viii. 13. be a truth, That "they who
"live after the fleſh ſhall die," you will run the hazard, and bear the penalty of eternal death? If Heb. xii. 14. prove true, That "without holineſs no man ſhall ſee God," you will be content to be baniſhed from his preſence for evermore? Speak your hearts in this matter, and tell us, don't you live betwixt atheiſtical ſurmiſes, that all theſe are but cunning artifices, and fears that at laſt they will prove the greateſt verities?

4. Hath not God given you all the ſatisfaction you can reaſonably deſire, of the undoubted truth and certainty of this world? What would you have, which you have not already? Would you have a voice from heaven? the ſcriptures you read, or hear are a more ſure word than ſuch a voice would be, 1 Pet.

i. 19. Or would you have a meſſenger from hell? He that believeth not the written word, neither would believe "if one "ſhould riſe from the dead," Luke xvi. 31. View the innate characters of the ſcripture, is it not altogether pure and holy, full of divine wiſdom and awful majeſty, and in every reſpect, ſuch as evidenceth its author to be the wiſe, holy, and juſt God, who ſearcheth the hearts and reins? Look upon the ſeals and confirmations of it; hath not God confirmed it by divers miracles from heaven, a ſeal which neither men or devils could counterfeit? And do not you ſee the bleſſing and power of God accompanying it in the converſion and wonderful change of men's hearts and lives, which can be done by no other hand than God's? Say not, the miracles, which confirm the goſpel, are but uncertain traditions, and except you yourſelves ſee them wrought, you cannot believe them. There are a thouſand things which you do believe, though you never ſaw them; and what you require for your ſatisfaction, every man may require the ſame for his; and ſo Chriſt muſt live again in all parts of this world, and repeat his miracles over and over, in all ages, to ſatisfy the unreaſonable incredulity of thoſe that queſtion their truth, after the fulleſt confirmation and ſeal hath been given, that is capable to be given, or the heart of man can deſire ſhould be given; and if all this ſhould be done, you might be as far from believing, as now you are; for many of thoſe that ſaw and heard the things wrought by Chriſt, contradicted and blaſphemed, and ſo might you.

5. Satan, who undermines your aſſent to theſe things, is forced to give his own: he that tempts you to look on them as fables, himſelf knows, and is convinced that they are realities; "The "devils alſo believe and tremble," James ii. 19. they know and feel the truth of theſe things, though it be their great deſign, and intereſt, to ſhake your aſſent to them: they know Chriſt is the Son of God, and that there will be a day in which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, and that there are torments prepared for themſelves, and all whom they ſeduce from God, Matth. viii. 29. If you ungod God, you muſt unman yourſelves; yea, not only make yourſelves leſs than men, but worſe than devils.

6. In a word, let thy own heart, O Atheiſt, be judge, whether theſe be real doubts ſtill ſticking in your minds, after you have done all that becomes men to do for ſatisfaction in ſuch important caſes? Or whether they be not ſuch principles as you willingly foment and nouriſh in your hearts, as a protection to your ſenſual luſts, whoſe pleaſures you would fain have, without in-

terruptions and over-awings by the fears of a judgment to come, and a righteous retribution from a juſt and terrible God! Examine your hearts in that point, and you will ſoon find the cheat to be in that I here point you to: you have not ſtudied the word impartially, nor brought your doubts and ſcruples with an humble, unbiaſſed, teachable ſpirit to thoſe that are wiſe and able to reſolve them, much leſs prayed for the Spirit of illumination; but willingly entertained whatever atheiſtical wits invent, or the devil ſuggeſts, as a denfenſative againſt the checks of conſcience, and fears of hell, in the way of ſin. You are loath thoſe things ſhould be true, which the ſcriptures ſpeak, and are glad of any colourable argument or pretence to ſtill your own conſciences. Is not this the caſe? The Lord ſtop your deſperate courſe; your paths lead to hell.

The ninth way of loſing the precious ſoul opened.

IX. Precious ſouls are daily plunged into the gulph of perdition by *profaneneſs* and *debauchery*. How many every where lie wallowing in this puddle? glorying in their ſhame, and running into all exceſs of riot? The hypocrite ſteals to hell in a private cloſe way of concealed ſin; but the profane gallop along the public road at noon-day; "They declare their ſin as Sodom, "and hide it not;" Iſa. iii. 9. "The ſhew of their countenance "teſtifieth againſt them." The hypocrite hath devotion in his countenance, and heaven in his mouth; you know not by his words and countenance, whither he is going; but the profane hide it not, they are paſt ſhame, and above bluſhing at the moſt horrid impieties. Look, as God hath ſome ſervants more eminent, forward, and couragious in the ways of godlineſs than others, men that will not hide their principles, or be aſhamed of the ways of godlineſs in the face of danger; ſo the devil hath ſome ſervants as eminent for wickedneſs, who ſcorn to ſneak to hell by concealment of their wickedneſs, but avow and own it, without fear or ſhame, in the open ſight of heaven and earth. Wherever they come, they defile the air they breathe in with horrid blaſphemies and obſcene diſcourſes not to be named, and leave a ſtrong ſcent of hell behind them.

This age hath brought forth multitudes of theſe monſters, the reproach and ſhame of the nation that bred them. I have little hope to ſtop any of them in their career and full ſpeed to hell. They have loſt the *ſenſe of ſin*, the reſtraints of *ſhame* and *fear*; and then what is left to check them in their courſe? I cannot hope that ſuch a diſcourſe as this ſhall ever come into their hands, except it be to ſacrifice it to the flames; yet not knowing the ways of providence, which are unſearchable, and

what use God may make upon one occasion or another of these following considerations, I will adventure to drop a few words upon these forlorn sinners, as far as they seem to be gone beyond recovery; beseeching the Lord to make way for these things to their hands and hearts, and make them the instruments of pulling some of them as brands out of the burning.

The ninth way to hell, by profaneness, stopt.

1. And first, let it be laid to heart, that though the case and state of many thousand souls be doubtful and uncertain, so that neither themselves, nor any other know what they are, or to whom they belong! yet thy condition, O profane sinner, is without controversy, miserable and forlorn; all men know whose you are, and whither you are going. The apostle appeals, in this case, to the bar of every man's reason and conscience, as a thing allowed and yielded by all, Eph. v. 5. "For this ye know (saith "he,) that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous "man, who is an idolator, hath any inheritance in the kingdom "of Christ and of God." This is a clear case, there is no controversy about it. Many there be in a doubtful case, but no doubt of these, they are fast and sure in the power of Satan; and as sure as God is a God of truth, they that die in this condition shall never see his face. And to the same purpose again, 1 Cor. vi. 9. "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the "kingdom of God? be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor "idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, "nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom "of God." *Know ye not?* saith he, *q. d.* "Sure you cannot "be so ignorant and blind to think that there is any room in "heaven for such wretches as these. If the righteous be scarcely saved, where shall the sinner and ungodly appear? If all "strictness, holiness, self-denial, diligence, be all little enough "to win heaven, what hope can there be of those that not only "cast off all duties of religion, but also cast themselves into all "the opposite ways and courses which directly lead to damnation?" He that refuseth his food endangers his life; but he that drinks poison, certainly and speedily destroys it.

2. As far as you are gone in a course of profaneness, you are not yet gone beyond the reach of mercy and all hopes of salvation; if now at last, after all your debaucheries and profaneness, the Lord touch your hearts with the sense of your sinful and miserable estate, and turn your feet to his testimonies. When the apostle, in 1 Cor vi. 9, 10. had told us the doom of such men, upon the supposition of their perseverance in that course,

yet presently he adds, as a motive to their repentance, an example of mercy upon such wretches as these, "And such were "some of you, but ye are washed," ver. 11. The golden sceptre of free grace hath been held forth to many, as prophane, and notorious sinners as you, to blaspheming Saul, to a Mary Magdalen, to a Manasseh. 'Tis not the greatness of the sin, but the impenitence, and infidelity of the sinner, that ruins him. Well, then, there is a certainty of damnation, if you go on, and yet a possibility of forgiveness, and mercy before you; a mercy invaluable.

3. Nay, this is not all; but in some respect, there is more probability, and hope of your return, and repentance, than there is of many others who have led a more sober, smooth, and civil life, than you have done. Your profaneness hath more dishonoured God, but the morality, and civility of some men, secures them faster in the snare of the devil: They have many things in themselves, to build up their presumptuous hopes upon, but you have nothing. It is hard for conviction to reach that man's conscience that hath righteousness of his own to trust in; but methinks it should have an easier access to yours, whose notorious courses lay your consciences naked, and bare before the word, to be wounded by it. Christ's ministry had little success among the Pharisees, who were righteous in their own eyes, but it wrought effectually upon *Publicans* and *sinners*. Hence Christ told them, Matth. xxi. 31. that "Publicans, and Har-"lots, go into the kingdom of God before them." Publicans were esteemd the worst of men, and Harlots the worst of women; yet the one, and the other, as vile as they were, stood fairer for conviction, and consequently for salvation, than those that thought they needed *no repentance*. All this is matter of hope, and runs into a powerful motive, and loud call to repentance. "He that "hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

The tenth way leading to destruction, marked.

X. Deep, and fixed prejudices against godliness, and the sincere professors thereof, precipitate thousands of souls into their own ruin, and damnation.

It was not without a weighty reason, that Christ denounced that wo upon the world, Matth. xviii. 7. "Wo unto the "world, because of offences." The poor world will be ruined by scandals, and prejudices; they will take such offences at the ways of godliness, that they will never have good thoughts of them any more. "This sect is every where spoken against," Acts xxviii. 22. and so Christians are condemned, διὰ τὸ ὄνομα,

becauſe of the common reproach, as Juſtin Martyr complained. All the ſcandals which fall out in the church, are ſo many ſwords, and daggers, put into the hands of the wicked world to murder their own ſouls withal. Some have ſucked in ſuch opinions of the ways of godlineſs, as make them irreconcileable enemies to them, and fierce oppoſers of them. And from hence are moſt of the perſecutions that befal the people of God. When you ſee ſhowers of ſlanders, and reproaches, going before, expect ſtorms of perſecutions coming after. Slanders beget prejudices, and theſe prepare for perſecutions. O how keen, and fierce, are the minds of many, againſt the upright, and innocent ſervants of God, whom they have firſt repreſented to themſelves in ſuch an odious dreſs, and character, as the devil hath drawn them in, upon their fancies, and imaginations! So the primitive Chriſtians were repreſented to the Heathens as monſters, and their conventions in the night, occaſioned by the fury of perſecutors, were reported to be for laſcivious, and barbarous ends, to deflower virgins, and murder innocent children: And by this artifice the Heathens were ſecured againſt converſion to Chriſt. This hath been the policy of hell from the beginning, and it hath proſpered ſo much in the world, that Satan hath no reaſon to change his hand. But how may this plot of hell be defeated, and the ruin of ſouls prevented?

The tenth way of deſtroying ſouls ſhut up, by two counſels.

1. It will be impoſſible to prevent the ruin of a great part of the world by prejudices againſt the ways of godlineſs, except thoſe who profeſs them, walk more holily, and conformably to the rule, and pattern of Chriſt, whoſe name is called upon by them. I ſhall therefore firſt addreſs my diſcourſe to the profeſſors of religion, beſeeching them, in the bowels of Chriſt, to take pity upon the multitudes of ſouls which are daily ruined, and deſtroyed by their ſcandals, and miſcarriages. Did you live according to the rules you profeſs, "your well-doing "would put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men," 1 Pet. ii. 15. and conſequently the ruin of many might be prevented. I remember * Bernard, ſpeaking of the lewd, and looſe life of the prieſts of his time, ſighs out this juſt, and bitter complaint to God about it; *Miſera eorum converſatio plebis tuae miſerabilis ſubverſio eſt:* O Lord! ſaid he, their miſerable converſation is the miſerable ſubverſion of thy people. O! of how many, who glory in the title of ſons of the church, may Chriſt ſay, as Jacob did of his two lewd ſons, Simeon and Levi, "You have

* Bern. in Converſ. *Pauli*, Ser. 1.

"troubled me, to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the "land," Gen. xxxiv. 30.

And how many professors, who pretend to more than ordinary reformation, and holiness, do shed soul blood, by their scandalous conversations. * Salvian brings in the wicked of his age upbraiding the looseness of Christians, in this manner; "Behold, those men who boast themselves redeemed from the "tyranny of Satan, and profess themselves dead to the world, "yet are conquered by the lusts of it." And † Cyprian, long before his day, brings in the Heathens thus insulting over loose Christians: "Where is that catholic law which they believe? "Where are the examples of piety, and chastity, which they "should learn? They read the gospel, yet are immodest; they "hear the apostles, yet are drunk." O professors! where are your bowels to the poor souls of sinners? If your neighbour's ox, or ass fall into the pit, you are bound to deliver him, if you can; and will you not do as much for a precious soul, as you would do for a beast? Nay, you dig pits, by your scandalous lives, to destroy them. If you sin, there are instruments enough to spread it, and multitudes of souls ready prepared to take the infection. Say not, if they do, the fault is theirs; for though they are principals in the murder of their own souls, by taking the scandal, yet you are accessories in giving it: He is a mad man that will kill himself with a sword, and he no better that will put it into his hand.

O therefore, if you have any regard to the precious souls of men, live up to the rules of your profession! O be blameless, and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a perverse, and froward generation! let the heavenliness of your conversation stop those mouths that accuse you as men of a worldly spirit; let them see, by your moderation in seeking it, your patience in losing it, your readiness in distributing it, that it is a groundless calumny, under which your names suffer. Let them see, by your apparel, company, and discourses, you are not such proud, lofty spirits, as you are represented to be. Convince them, by your flexibleness to all things that are lawful, and expedient, by manifesting, as much

* *Ecce qui jactant se redemptos a tyrannide Satanae, qui praedicant se mortuos mundo, nihilominus a cupiditatibus suis vincuntur.* Salvian.

† *Ubi est catholica lex quam credunt? Ubi pietatis et castitatis exempla quae discant? Evangelia legunt, et impudici sunt; Apostolos audiunt, et inebriantur.* Cyp.

as in you lieth, that it is the pure bond, and tie of conſcience, which keeps you from compliance in all other things, and by your meekneſs in ſuffering for ſuch non-compliance, that you are not ſuch turbulent, factious incendiaries, as the wicked world ſlanderouſly reports you to be. Convince the world, by your exact righteouſneſs in all your civil dealings, and by the lip of truth in all your promiſes, and engagements, that you have the fear of God in your hearts, as well as the livery of Chriſtianity upon your backs. In a word, ſo live, that none may have juſt ground to believe the impudent ſlanders the devil raiſes in the world againſt you. Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven. Without your care, and circumſpection, the ſhedding of a world of precious ſoul blood can never be prevented.

2. Let me adviſe, and beſeech all men to be ſo juſt to others, and merciful to their own ſouls, as not to caſt them away for ever, by receiving prejudices againſt godlineſs, from the miſcarriages of ſome, who make more than a common profeſſion of it. To prevent this fatal effect of ſcandal, and prejudice at religion, I deſire a few particulars may be impartially weighed.

Firſt, Very many of thoſe ſcandals, bandied up and down the world againſt the profeſſors of godlineſs, are deviſed, and forged in hell, as ſo many traps, and ſnares to catch, and deſtroy men's ſouls, to beget an irreconcileable averſion, and enmity in men to the ways of God. "They deviſe deceitful "matters (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) againſt them that are quiet in the "land," Pſal. xxxv. 20. So Jer. xviii. 18. "Come, ſay they, "let us deviſe devices againſt Jeremiah, and ſmite him with "the tongue." And there is as little equity in the credulous receiver, as there is honeſty in the wicked forger of theſe ſlanders: with one arrow of cenſure, you wound no leſs than three, *viz.* the honour of God, your innocent brother, and your own ſouls: As to the two former wounds, they will, in due time, be healed; God will vindicate his own name fully, and the reputation of his innocent ſervants ſhall be cleared, and repaired abundantly; but, in the mean time, your ſouls may periſh, by the wounds, prejudices have given, ſo that you may never be reconciled to godlineſs, and its profeſſors, whilſt you live, but turn ſcoffers, and perſecutors of them.

Secondly, Examine whether the matters that are charged upon them as their crimes, be not their duties. Sometimes it falls out to be ſo, and if ſo, you fight more immediately, and directly againſt God, than men. This was David's caſe, Pſal.

lxix. 10. "When I wept, and chastened my soul, that was "to my reproach;" my piety was turned to reproach. They called his tears crocodile's tears, and his fastings hypocritical shadows of devotion, and humility. Thus the very matter of his duty was turned into scorn, and reproach. And so it was with the primitive Christians, their very owning of themselves to be Christians, was crime enough to condemn them.

Thirdly, If professors of religion do in some things act unbecoming their holy profession, yet every slip, and failing in their lives, is no sufficient warrant for you to censure their persons as hypocrites, much less to fall upon religion itself, and condemn it for the faults of them that profess it. There's many an upright heart overtaken by temptation. You see their miscarriages, but you see not their humiliations, and self-condemnations, before God for them. 'Foul, and fearful (saith a * grave divine) was the scandal of David; and what was the issue? Presently the enemies of God, and godliness, began to lift their heads, and fall foul upon David's religion, 2 Sam. xii. they blasphemed the name of God. O this is he that was so grand a zealot, that the zeal of God's house did eat him up. This is the man, that, out of his transcendent zeal, danced before the ark; this is he that prayed thrice a day, at morning, noon, and night: This is he that was so precise, and strict in his family, that a wicked person should not dwell in his house. This your great, precise zealot, hath defiled the wife, and murdered the husband. Now you see what his religion is, now you see what comes of this profession of so much holiness, and godliness.'

O that men would seriously consider their evil in such censures as these! what is all this to religion? Doth religion any way countenance, or patronize such practices? Nay, doth it not impartially and severely condemn them? It is the glory of the Christian religion, that it is pure, and undefiled, James i. 27. These practices flow from no principle of religion, nor are chargeable upon it, for it teacheth men the very contrary, Tit. ii. 11, 12. If I see a Papist sin boldly, or an Arminian slight grace, I justly condemn their principles, in, and with their practices, because Popery sets pardons to sale, and Arminianism exalts nature into the place of grace: But doth the doctrine of the gospel lead to any immoralities? Charge it, if you can.

Fourthly, And as senseless a thing it is, to condemn all, for the miscarriages, and faults of some; which, yet, is the com-

* Jer. Dyke, of Scandal, p. 53.

mon practice of the world. Are all, that profeſs godlineſs, looſe, and careleſs? No, no: many are an ornament to their holy profeſſion, and the glory of Chriſtianity. And why muſt the innocent be condemned for the guilty? What is your reaſon, and ground for that? Why might not the enemies of Chriſtianity have condemned the eleven apoſtles, upon the fall of Judas? Had they not as good a warrant for it, as you have for this?

To conclude, You little know what a ſnare of the devil is laid for your ſouls, in all thoſe prejudices, and offences, you take, at the ways, and profeſſors of godlineſs; and what a wo you bring upon your own ſouls by them. You ſpeak evil of perſons, and things, you know not, and prejudice is like ſtill to keep you in ignorance of them. "Wo to the world (ſaith "Chriſt) becauſe of offences; *and* bleſſed is he that is not of-"fended at me."

The eleventh way of ruining the precious ſoul, opened.

XI. The eleventh way, wherein abundance of precious ſouls periſh, in the chriſtianized, and profeſſing world, is the way of formal hypocriſy in religion, and zeal about the externals of worſhip. Such a generation of men have, in all ages, mingled themſelves with the ſincere worſhippers of God; and the inducement to it is obvious, the form of godlineſs is an honour, but the power of it a burden. By the former, earthly intereſts are accommodated; by the latter, they are frequently expoſed, and hazarded.

We find, in the Jewiſh church, abundance of ſuch chaff intermixed with the wheat, which the doctrine of Chriſt diſcovered, and purged out of the flour, Mat. iii. 9, 12. ſuch were the Phariſees, who were exceeding zealous for traditions, and the external rites, and ceremonies of the law, but inwardly full of all filthineſs, Mat. xv. 7, 8, 9. Men that honoured the dead, and perſecuted the living ſaints; that reverenced the material temple, and deſtroyed the living temples; that ſtrained at gnats of ceremonies, and ſwallowed down the groſſeſt immoralities.

And well had it been, if this generation had ended with that ſtate, and time of the church; but we find a prophecy of the increaſe of theſe men in the latter days, 2 Tim. iii. 5. which is every where ſadly verified. Religion runs into ſtalk, and blade, into leaves, and ſuckers, which ſhould be concocted into pith and fruit: Yea, it is of ſad conſideration, that, amongſt many high pretenders to reformation, their zeal, which ſhould nouriſh the vitals of religion, and maintain their daily work of mortification and communion with God, ſpends itſelf in ſome

by-opinion, whilst practical godliness visibly languisheth in their conversations. How many are there that hate doctrinal errors, who yet perish by practical ones? who hate a false doctrine; but, in mean time perish by a false heart? 'Tis very difficult to reclaim this sort of men from the error of their way; and thereby save their souls from hell. However, let the means be used, and the success left with God.

The eleventh way to hell, by formality, barred up.

1. No sin entangles the souls of men faster, or damns them with more certainty, and aggravation, than the sin of formal hypocrisy: it holds the soul fastest on earth, and sinks it deepest into hell. There was no sort of men upon whom the doctrine of Christ, and the apostles, had so little success, and effect, as the Scribes and Pharisees; they derided him, when *publicans*, and *sinners*, trembled, and believed, Luke xvi. 14, 15. The form of Godliness wards off all convictions; their zeal for the externals of religion secures them against the fears of damnation, whilst, in the mean time, their hypocrisy plunges them deeper into hell, than others that never made such shews of sanctity, and devotion: "He shall appoint him his portion with "hypocrites;" Mat. xxiv. 51. that is, he shall be punished in hell, as hypocrites are punished, *viz.* with the greatest, and sorest punishment. Hypocrisy is a double iniquity, and will be punished with double destruction: their ungrounded hopes of heaven serve but to pully up their wretched souls to a greater height of vain confidence, which gives them the more dreadful jerk in their lamentable, and eternal disappointment.

2. Blind, superstitious zeal, which spends itself only about the externals of religion, usually prepares, and engageth men in a more violent persecution of those that are really godly, and conscientious. The Lord opened a great door of opportunity at Antioch, to Paul; the whole city came together to attend the discoveries of Christ in the first publication of the gospel, and the poor Gentiles began to taste the sweetness of the gospel; but the devil perceiving his kingdom begin to totter, immediately stirred up his instruments to persecute the apostles, and drive them out of the country: and who more fit for that work, than the devout, and honourable women? Acts xiii. 15. These stirred up their husbands, and all they had influence upon, under a fair pretence of zeal for the law, to obstruct the progress of the gospel. *No bird* (saith one) *like the living bird, to draw others into the net.* Men of greatest names, and pretensions to religion; if graceless, are the most dangerous instru-

ments the * devil can employ to the ruin, and extirpation of true godliness. Such a zealot was Paul, in his unregenerate state.

3. Nothing is more common, than to find men hot, and zealous against false worship, whilst their hearts are as cold as a stone, in the *vitals*, and *essentials*, of *true religion*. Many can dispute warmly against *adorations of images, praying to angels; and saints departed*, who all the while are like those dead images which others worship. Jehu was a zealot against idolatry; and yet the vital power of true godliness was a stranger to his soul, 2 Kings x. 15, 16. The Pharisees spared no pains to make a *proselyte*, and yet all the while were the children of the devil themselves, Mat. xxiii. 15.

This is a sad case, yet what more common? The Lord open the eyes of these men, and convince them, in season, that their zeal runs in the wrong channel, and spends itself upon things which shall never profit them. O if they were but as much concerned to promote the love of God, and life of Godliness in themselves, and others, as they are about some external accidents, and appendages of religion, what blessings would they be to the world, and what evidence would they have of their own sincerity?

The twelfth way to hell, opened.

XII. The twelfth way to hell, in which many souls are carried on smoothly, and securely, to their own destruction, is, the way of *mere civility*, and *moral honesty*, wherein men rest as in a safe state, never doubting but a civil life will produce an issue into an happy death. *Moral honesty* is a lovely thing, and greatly tends to the peace, and order of the world; but it is not saving grace, nor gives any man a good title to Christ, and salvation. Indeed there can be no grace in that soul in which civility, and moral honesty are not found: but these may be found in thousands that have no grace.

That which ruins souls, is not the exercise of moral virtues, but their reliance upon them: they use their morality as a shield to secure their consciences from the convictions of the word, which would shew them their sinful, and miserable state by nature. Thus the Pharisee, Luke xviii. 11, 12. "God, I thank "thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, "adulterers, or even as this publican;" he blesseth himself in the conceits of his own safety, and happiness. Let debauched, and prophane persons look to it, I am well enough; though,

† Satan ascends by the rib, as by a ladder to the heart. *Gregor.*

alas! poor man, his being less evil, at best, could but procure him a cooler hell, or a milder flame. This was the case of the young man, Mat. xix. 28. and like a young man, indeed, he reasons. He sums up all the stock of his civil life, and thinks it strange if that be not enough to make a purchase of eternal life. *What lack I yet?* Alas! poor soul, every thing necessary to salvation; the very first stone was not laid, when he thought the building was finished: And this is the case of multitudes, both young and old; and that which greatly confirms, and settles them in this their dangerous security, is the general, indistinct doctrine of some, who pretend to be guides to the souls of others, the scope of whose ministry aims at no higher mark, than to civilize the people, and press moral duties upon them, as if this were all that were necessary to salvation: Nay, it is well if some do not industriously pull down the pale of distinction betwixt morality, and regeneration, and tell the world, in plain English, *That there is no reason to put a difference betwixt such as are baptized, and live morally honest, and those that have saving grace; and they that do so, are only a few, who are highly conceited of themselves, and censorious of all others, whom they please to vote formal, and moral.*

This, indeed, is the way to fix them where they are; if Christ had not taken another method with Nicodemus, and his ministers had not pressed *the necessity of regeneration*, and *the insufficiency of moral honesty to salvation*, how thin had the number of true converts been, though, at most, they are but a handful, in comparison of the *unregenerate!*.

O that God would bless what follows, to undeceive, and save some poor soul out of this dangerous snare of the devil!

The twelfth way to damnation barred, by three considerations.

1. Blind not yourselves with the lustre of your own moral virtues, a life smoothly drawn with civility through the world: for though it must be acknowledged there is a loveliness, and attracting sweetness in morality, and civility, yet these things rather respect earth, than heaven, and are designed for the conservation of the order, and peace of this world, not for your salvation, and title to the world to come. Without justice, and truth, *kingdoms*, and *commonwealths* would become *mountains of prey*, and *dens of robbery*. Where there is no trust, there can be no traffic; and where there is no truth, there can be no trust. Civility is the very basis of human society, a world of good accrues to men by it, and abundance of mischief is prevented by it; but it never gave any man *an interest in Christ*,

or *a title to salvation.* The Romans and Lacedemonians, who perished in the darkness of Heathenism, excelled in morality; there is nothing of Christ, or regeneration, in these things, how much of excellency soever be ascribed to them. Paul, the Pharisee, was a blameless person, touching the law, and yet, at the same time, not only utterly ignorant of Christ, but a bitter enemy to him, and all that were his. Till you can find another way to heaven than by regeneration, repentance, and faith, never lean upon such a deceitful, and rotten prop, as mere civility is.

2. *Civilized nature* is *unsanctified nature* still; and without *sanctification* there is no *salvation*, Heb. xii. 14. Civility adorneth nature, but doth not change it. Moral virtues are so many sweet flowers strewed over a dead corpse, which hide the lothsomeness of it, but inspire not life into it. "* Morality hides, "and covers, but never mortifies, nor cures the corruptions of "nature;" and mortified they must be, or you cannot be saved: take the best nature in the world, and let it be adorned with all the ornaments of morality (which they call *homiletical virtues*) and add to these all the common gifts of the Spirit, which are for assistance, and ministry; yet all this cannot secure that soul from hell, or be the ground-work for a just claim to any promise of salvation: all this is but nature improved, not regenerated. Morality is neither produced as saving grace is, nor works such effects as grace worketh; there are no pangs of repentance introducing it, it may cost many an aking head, but no aking heart for sin; no such distressed outcries as that, Acts ii. 37. "Men, and brethren, what shall we do?" Nor doth it produce such humility, self abasement, heavenly tempers, and tendencies of soul, as grace doth. Cheat not yourselves, therefore, in so important a concern as salvation is, with an empty shadow.

3. Civility is not only found in multitudes that are out of Christ, but may be the cause, and reason why they are christless: mistake not, I am not pleading the cause of prophaneness, nor disputing civility out of the world; I heartily wish there were more of it to be found in every place, it would exceedingly promote the peace, order, and tranquillity of the world: but yet it is certain, that the eyes of thousands are so dazzled with the lustre of their own morality, that they see no need of Christ, nor feel any want of his righteousness, and this is the ruin of their souls. Thus Christ brings in the Pharisee with his proud

* *Abscondit, non abscondit vita.* Lactant.

boaſt, that he is "no extortioner, adulterer, nor unjuſt, or ſuch "an one as that publican," Luke xviii. 11. O what a ſaint doth he vote himſelf, when he compared his life with the other's! Well, then, beware you be not deceived by thinking you are ſafe, becauſe you are got out of the dirty road to hell, when, all the while, you are only ſtepped over the hedge into a cleaner path to damnation. *You have had a ſhort account of ſome few of thoſe many ways in which the precious ſouls of men are eternally loſt: Let us briefly apply it in the following inferences.*

Infer. 1. If there be ſo many ways of loſing the ſoul, and ſuch multitudes of ſouls loſt in every one of them, *then the number of ſaved ſouls muſt needs be exceeding ſmall.*

The number of the ſaved may be conſidered, either *abſolutely* or *comparatively*: In the firſt conſideration they appear great, and many, even a great multitude, which no man can number, Rev. vii. 9. but if compared with thoſe that are loſt, they make but *a ſmall remnant* Iſa. i. 9. *a little flock*, Mat. xii. 32. For when we conſider how vaſtly the kingdom of Satan is extended, who is called *the god of this world*, from the world of people who are in ſubjection to him: how ſmall a part of this earthly globe is enlightened with the beams of goſpel-light, and that Satan is the acknowledged ruler of all the reſt, Eph. vi. 12. But when it ſhall be farther conſidered, that out of this ſpot, on which the light of the goſpel is riſen, the far greateſt part are loſt, alſo: O what a poor handful remains to Jeſus Chriſt, as the purchaſe of his blood!

It is of trembling conſideration, how many thouſands of families, amongſt us, are mere nurſeries for hell, parents bringing forth and breeding up children for the devil; not one word of God (except it be in the way of blaſphemy, or prophaneneſs) to be heard among them. How naturally their ignorant and wicked education puts them in the courſe and tide of the world, which carries them away irreſiſtibly to hell; how one ſinner confirms and animates another, in the ſame ſinful courſe, till they are all paſt hope, or remedy: how the rich are taken with the baits of ſenſual pleaſures, and the poor loſt in the brake of diſtracting, worldly cares, except here and there a ſoul plucked out of the ſnare of the devil, by the wonderful power, and arm of God. On the one ſide, you may ſee multitudes drowned in open prophaneneſs, and debauchery; and, on the other ſide, many thouſands ſecurely ſleeping, in the ſtate of civility, and morality: ſome key-cold, and without the leaſt ſenſe of religion; others hell-hot, with blind zeal, and ſuperſtitious madneſs, againſt true godlineſs, and the ſincere practiſers of it. Some

living all their days under the ordinances of God, and never touched with any conviction of their sin, or misery; others convinced, and making some faint offers at religion; but their convictions (like blossoms nipt with a frosty morning) fall off, and no fruit follows. And as *rubies, sapphires*, and *diamonds*, are very few, in comparison of the *pebbles*, and *common stones* of the earth; so are true Christians, in comparison of multitudes that perish in the snares of Satan.

Infer. 2. *How little reason have the unregenerate to glory, and boast themselves in their earthly acquisitions and successes, whilst in the mean time, their souls are lost!* they have gotten other things, but lost their souls. It is strange to see how some men, by rolling a small fortune up and down the world (as boys do a snow-ball) have increased the heap, and raised a great estate; they have attained their design and aim in the world, and hug themselves in the pleased thoughts of their happiness; but, alas, among all the thoughts of their gains, there is not one thought of what they have lost. O if such a thought as this could find room in their hearts, 'I have, indeed, gotten an estate, but I 'have lost my soul; I have much of the world, but nothing of 'Christ; gold and silver I have, but grace, peace and pardon I 'have not; my body is well provided for, but my soul is na-'ked, empty, and destitute.' Such a thought, like the sentence written on the wall, would make their hearts fall within them. What a rapture, and transport of joy did the sight of a full barn cast that worldling into! Luke xii. 19, 20. "Soul, take thine "ease, eat, drink, and be merry;" little dreaming that death was just then at the door, to take away the cloth, guest, and all together; that the next hour his friends would be scrambling for his estate, the worms for his body, and the devil for his soul.

O how many have not only lost their souls, whilst they have been drudging for the world, but have sold their souls to purchase a little of the world! parted, by consent, with their best treasure for a very trifle, and yet think they have a great bargain of it! Surely, if poor sinners did but apprehend what they have lost, as well as what they have gained, their gains would yield them as little comfort as Judas's money did, for which he sold both his soul and Saviour. Instead of those pleasing frolics of wanton worldlings, what a cold shiver would run through all their bones and bowels, did they but understand what it is to lose a gracious God, and a precious soul, and both eternally, and irrecoverably!

The just God remains still to avenge and punish the sinner;

but the favour of God, that friendly look, is gone; the peace of God, that heaven upon earth, is gone; the eſſence of the ſoul remains ſtill, but its purity, peace, joy, hope, and happineſs, theſe are gone; and theſe being gone, what can remain, but a tormenting, piercing ſight of thoſe things, for which you have ſold them?

Infer. 3. *Hence let us eſtimate the evil of ſin, and ſee what a dreadful thing that is, which men commonly ſport themſelves with, and make ſo light of: it is not only a wrong and injury to the ſoul, but the loſs and utter ruin of the ſoul for ever.*

It is ſaid, Prov. viii. 36. "He that ſinneth againſt me, wrongeth his own ſoul." And if this were all the miſchief ſin did us, it were bad enough; a wrong to the ſoul is a greater evil than the ruin of the body or eſtate, and all the outward enjoyments of this life can be; but to loſe the precious ſoul, and deſtroy it to all eternity, O what can eſtimate ſuch a loſs! Now the reſult and laſt effect of ſin, is death, the death of the precious ſoul. Rom. vi. 21. "The end of thoſe things is death." So Ezek. xviii. 4. "The ſoul that ſinneth ſhall die."

Sin doth not deſtroy the being of the ſoul by *annihilation*, but it doth that which the damned ſhall find, and acknowledge to be much worſe; it cuts off the ſoul from God, and deprives it of all its felicity, joy, and pleaſure, which conſiſts in the enjoyment of him. Such is the dolefulneſs and fearfulneſs of this reſult and iſſue of ſin, that when God himſelf ſpeaks of it, he puts on a paſſion, and ſpeaks of it with the moſt feeling concernment. Ezek. xxxiii. 11. "As I live, ſaith the Lord, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked: Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael?" *q. d.* Why will ye wilfully caſt away your own ſouls? Why will ye chuſe the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, at the price of my wrath and fury, poured out for ever? O think of this, you that make ſo light a matter of committing ſin! we pity thoſe, who, in the depth of melancholy or deſperation, lay violent hands upon themſelves, and, in a deſperate mood, cut their own throats; but certainly, for a man to murder his own ſoul, is an act of wickedneſs as much beyond it, as the value of the ſoul is above the body.

Infer. 4. *What an invaluable mercy is Jeſus Chriſt to the world, who came on purpoſe to ſeek, and to ſave ſuch as were loſt?*

In Adam all were ſhipwrecked and caſt away: Chriſt is the plank of mercy, let down from heaven to ſave ſome. The loſs of ſouls, by the fall, had been as irrecoverable, as the loſs of the fallen angels, had not God, in a way above all human thoughts,

and counsels, contrived the method of their redemption. It is astonishing to consider the admirable harmony and glorious triumph of all the divine attributes, in this great project of heaven, for the recovery of lost souls: It is the "wonder of "angels," 1 Pet. i. 12. the "great mystery of godliness," 1 Tim. iii. 16. the matter and subject of the triumphant song of redeemed saints, Rev. i. 5. and well it may, when we consider a more noble species of creatures finally lost, and no Mediator of reconciliation appointed betwixt God and them: this is to save an earthen pitcher, whilst the vessel of gold is let fall, and no hand is stretched out to save it.

But what is most astonishing, is, that so great a person, as the Son of God, should come himself, from the Father's bosom, to save us, by putting himself into our room and stead, being made a curse for us, Gal. iii. 13. He leaves the bosom of his Father, and all the ineffable delights of heaven, disrobes himself of his glory, and is found in fashion as a man, yea, becomes a worm, and no man; submits to the lowest step and degree of abasement, to save lost sinners. What a low stoop doth Christ make, in his humiliation, to catch the souls of poor sinners out of hell! Herein was love, that God sent his own Son, "to be "the propitiation for our sins," 1 John iv. 10. "and so God "loved the world," John iii. 16. at this rate he was content to save lost sinners.

How seasonable was this work of mercy, both in its general exhibition to the world, in the incarnation of Christ, and in its particular application of it to the soul of every lost sinner, by the Spirit! When he was first exhibited to the world, he found them all lost sheep gone astray, every one turning to his own way, Isa. liii. 6. he speaks of our lost estate by nature, both collectively, or in general: "we all went astray:" and distributively, or in particular, "Every one turned to his own way;" and in the fulness of time, a Saviour appeared.

And how seasonable was it, in its particular application? How securely were we wandering onwards, in the paths of destruction, fearing no danger, when he graciously opened our eyes by conviction, and pulled us back by heart turning-grace! No mercy like this; it is an astonishing act of grace, that stands alone.

Infer. 5. *If there be so many ways to hell, and so few that escape it, how are all concerned to strive, to the utmost, in order to their own salvation?*

In Luke xiii. 23. a certain person proposed a curious question to Christ; "Lord, are there few that be saved?" He saw a multitude flocking to Christ, and thronging with great zeal to

hear him; and he could not conceive but heaven must fill, proportionably to the numbers he saw in the way thither. But Christ's answer, ver. 24. at once rebukes the curiosity of the questionist, fully resolves the question propounded, and sets home his own duty and greatest concernment upon him. It rebukes his curiosity, and is, as if he should say, Be the number of the saved more or less, what is that to thee? Strive thou to be one of them. It fully solves the question propounded, by distinguishing those that attend upon the means of salvation, into seekers, and strivers. In the first respect there are many, who by a cheap and easy profession, seek heaven; but take them under the notion of strivers, *i. e.* persons heartily engaged in religion, and who make it their business, and so they will shrink up into a small number; and he presseth home his great business, and concern upon him, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate.*

By *gate* understand whatsoever is introductive to blessedness and salvation: by the epithet *strait*, understand the difficulties and severities attending religion; all that suffering and self-denial, which those that are bound for heaven should reckon upon, and expect: and by *striving*, understand the diligent and constant use of all those means and duties, how hard, irksome, and costly soever they are. The word ἀγωνίζεσθε hath a deep sense and emphasis, and imports striving, even to an agony; and this duty is enforced two ways upon him, and every man else: First, by the indisputable sovereignty of Christ, from whom the command comes; and also from the deep interest and concern every soul hath in the commanded duty. It is not only a simple compliance with the will of God, but what also involves our own salvation and eternal happiness in it: our great duty, and our great interest are twisted together in this command; your eternal happiness depends upon the success of it. A man is not crowned, except he strive lawfully, *i. e.* successfully and prevalently. O therefore, so run, so strive, that ye may obtain! if you have any value for your souls, if you would not be miserable to eternity, strive, strive! Believe it, you would find that the assurance of salvation drops not down from heaven in a night-dream, as the Turks fable their Alcoran to have done in that *lailato banzili*, night of demission, as they call it; no, no; the righteous themselves are scarcely saved: many seek, but few find. Strive, therefore, as men and women that are heartily concerned for their own salvation; sit not, with folded arms, like so many heaps of stupidity and sloth, whilst the door of hope is yet open, and such a sweet

voice from heaven calls to you, saying, Strive, souls, strive, if ever you expect to be partakers of the blessedness that is here to be enjoyed; strive, to the utmost of your abilities and opportunities. Such an heaven is worth striving to obtain, such an hell is worth striving to escape, such an invaluable soul is worth striving to save.

I confess, heaven is not the purchase or reward of your striving: no soul shall boastingly say there, Is not this the glory which my duties and diligence purchased for me? and yet, on the other side, it is as true, that without striving you shall never set foot there. Say not, it depends upon the pleasure of God, and not upon your diligence; for it is his declared will and pleasure, to bring men to glory in the way, though not for the sake of their own striving. As in the works of your civil calling, you know all the care, toil, and sweat of the husbandman, avails nothing of itself, except the sun and rain quicken and ripen the fruits of the earth; and yet no wise man will neglect ploughing and harrowing, sowing and weeding, because these labours avail not, without the influences of heaven, but waits for them in the way of his duty and diligence. Rational hope sets all the world to work. Do they plough in hope, and sow in hope, and will you not pray in hope, and hear in hope? You that know your souls to be hitherto strangers to Christ and the regenerating work of the Spirit; how is it, that you take them not aside, sometimes, out of the distracting noise, and hurries of the world, and thus bemoan them?

'O my poor, graceless, christless, miserable soul, how sad a 'case art thou in! Others have, but thou never feltest the burden 'of sin; thousands in the world are striving and labouring, 'searching and praying, to make their calling and election sure; 'whilst thou sittest still with folded hands, in a supine regard- 'lessness of the misery that is hastening upon thee. Canst thou 'endure the devouring wrath of God? Canst thou dwell with 'everlasting burnings? Hast thou fancied a tolerable hell? 'Or, is it easy to perish? Why dost thou not cast thyself at 'the feet of Christ, and cry, as long as breath will last, Lord, 'pity a sinful, miserable, undone, and self-condemning soul! 'Lord, smite this rocky heart, subdue this stubborn will, heal and 'save an undone soul ready to perish: The characters of death 'are upon it, it must be changed or condemned, and that in a 'little time. Bowels of pity, hear the cry of a soul distressed, 'and ready to perish.'

And you that do not understand the case, and state your souls are in, have you never a bible near you? O turn to those

places, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. where you will presently find the more obvious marks, and characters, God hath set upon the children of perdition; and if you find not yourself in that catalogue, among the unrighteous, fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, *&c.* then turn to John iii. 3. and solemnly ask thy own soul this question, Am I born again? Am I a new creature, or still in the same condition I was born in? What solid evidence, of the new birth, have I to rely upon, If I were now within a few gasps of death? Am not I the man, or woman, who lives in the very same sins which the word of God makes the symptoms and characters of damnation? And doth not my *conscience* witness against me, that I am utterly void and destitute of all that saving grace, and a mere stranger to the regenerating work of the Spirit, without which there can be no well-bottom'd hope of salvation? And if so, are not the tokens of death upon me? Am not I a person marked out for misery? And shall I sit still in a state of so much danger, and not once strive to make an escape from the wrath to come? Is this vile body worth so much toil and labour to support and preserve it? And is not my soul worth as much care and diligence to secure it from the everlasting wrath of the great, just, and terrible God? O that the consideration of the wrath to come, the multitudes all the world over preparing as fuel for it, and the door of opportunity yet held open to souls by the hand of grace to escape that wrath, might prevail with thy heart, reader, to strive, and that to the uttermost, to secure thy precious soul from the impending ruin.

* *

EPH. v. 16.—*Redeeming the time* (or opportunity) *because the days are evil.*

TIME is deservedly reckoned among the most precious mercies of this life; and that which makes it so valuable are the commodious seasons and opportunities for salvation which are vouchsafed to us therein: opportunity is the golden spot of time, the sweet and beautiful flower, growing upon the stalk of time *. If time be a *ring* of gold, opportunity is the rich *diamond* that gives it both its value and glory. The apostle well knew the value of time; and seeing how prodigally it was wast-

* Καιρος αυθος χρονου.

ed by the moſt, doth therefore in this place, earneſtly preſs all men to redeem, ſave, and improve it with the utmoſt diligence. In this, and the former *verſe*, we have,

1*ſt*, The duty injoined, *Walk circumſpectly.*

2*dly*, The *injunction* explained;

1. More generally, *Not as fools, but as wiſe.*

2. More particularly, *Redeeming the time.*

3. The exhortation ſtrongly inforced with a powerful motive, *Becauſe the days are evil.*

Among theſe particulars, my diſcourſe is principally concerned about the redemption of time, or opportunities, which in this life, are graciouſly vouchſafed us, in order to that which is to come: And here it will be needful to inquire,

1. What the apoſtle means by *time.*

2. What by the *redemption of time.*

1. Time is taken more largely or ſtrictly according to the double acceptation of the Hebrew word זמן which ſignifies ſometimes *time*, and ſometimes *occaſion*, *ſeaſon*, or *opportunity*, and accordingly is expreſt by χρονος and καιρος, *tempus* and *tempeſtivitas*: the latter is the word here uſed, and denotes the commodiouſneſs and fitneſs of ſome parts of time above others, for the ſucceſsful and proſperous management and accompliſhment of our main and great buſineſs here, which is to ſecure our intereſt in Chriſt, and glorify God in a courſe of fruitful obedience. For theſe great and weighty purpoſes our time is graciouſly lengthened out, and many fit opportunities preſented us in the revolutions thereof.

2. By the *redemption of time* †, we muſt underſtand the ſtudy, care, and diligence of Chriſtians, at the rate of all poſſible pains, at the expence of all earthly pleaſures, eaſe and gratifications of the fleſh, to reſcue their precious ſeaſons, both of ſalvation and ſervice, out of the hands of temptations, which ſo commonly rob unwary ſouls of them. Satan trucks with us for our time, as we did at firſt with the ſilly Indians for their gold and diamonds, who were content to exchange them for glaſs-beads and tinſel-toys. Many fair ſeaſons are forced, or cheated out of our hands, by the importunity of earthly cares, or deceitfulneſs of ſenſual pleaſures: at the expence and loſs of theſe, we muſt redeem and reſcue our time for higher and better uſes and purpoſes. We muſt ſpend theſe hours in prayer, meditation, ſearching our hearts, mortifying our luſts; which others do, and our fleſh fain would ſpend in ſenſual pleaſures, and gratifications of

† Εξαγοραζομενοι τον καιρον.

the fleshly appetite. If ever we expect to win the port of glory, we must be as diligent and careful as seamen are, to take every gale, that blows directly or obliquely to set them forward in their voyage. The note from hence is this;

Doct. *That the wisdom of a Christian is eminently discovered in saving and improving all opportunities in this world, for that world which is to come.*

God hangs the great things of eternity upon the small wires of times and seasons in this world: that may be done, or neglected in a day, which may be the ground-work of joy or sorrow to all eternity. There is a nick of opportunity which gives both success and facility to the great and weighty affairs of the soul as well as body; to come before it, is to seek the bird before it be hatched; and to come after it, is to seek it when it is fled. There is a twofold season, or opportunity of salvation.

1. One was Christ's season for the purchase of it.

2. The other is ours for the application of it.

1. Christ had a season assigned him for the impetration and purchase of our salvation; so you hear his Father bespeaking him, Isa. xlix. 8. "Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time "have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped "thee," רְצוֹן עֵת, *in tempore opportuno voluntatis, vel placito.* It was the wisdom of the Lord Jesus Christ to set in with the Father's time, to comply with his season: and it became a day of salvation, because it was the acceptable time which Christ took for it.

2. Men have their seasons and opportunities for the application of Christ, and his benefits, to their own souls: 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2. "We then as workers together with God, beseech you "also, that you receive not the grace of God in vain; for he "saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of "salvation have I succoured thee. Behold, now is the accepted "time, now is the day of salvation." He exhorts the Corinthians not to dally or trifle any longer in the great concerns of their salvation; for now, saith he, is your day. Christ had his day to purchase it, and he procured a day also for you to apply it, and this is that day: you enjoy it, you live under it: that golden day is now running: O! see that you frustrate not the design thereof, by receiving the gospel-grace in vain.

Now two things concur to make a fit season of salvation to the souls of men.

1. The external means and instruments.

2. The agency of the Spirit internally by, or with those external means.

1. Men have a season of salvation, when God sends the means and instruments of salvation among them. When the gospel is powerfully preached among a people, there is a door opened to them; 2 Cor. ii. 12. "When I came to Troas to preach the "gospel, a door was opened to me of the Lord." God as it were unlocks the door of heaven by the preaching of the gospel: Souls have then an opportunity to step in and be saved.

2. But yet it is not a *wide and effectual door* (as the apostle phrases it, 1 Cor. xvi. 9.) till the Spirit of God joins with, and works upon the heart by those external means and instruments; as the waters of the pool of Bethesda had no inherent sanative virtue in themselves, until the angel of the Lord descended and troubled them: but both together make a blessed season for the souls of men. Then he stands at the door, and knocks, by convictions and persuasions, Rev. iii. 20. strives with men, as he did with the old world by the ministry of Noah, Gen. vi. 3. Now the door of opportunity is indeed opened; but this will not always last; there is a time when *the Spirit ceases to strive*, and when *the door is shut*, Luke xiii. 25.

There is a season, when by the fresh impression of some *ordinance* or *providence* of God, mens hearts are awakened, and their affections stirred. It is now with the souls of men as it is with fruit trees in the spring, when they put forth blossoms; if they knit and set, fruit follows, if they be nipt and blasted, no fruit can be expected. For all convictions and motions of the affections are to grace, much the same thing as blossoms are to fruit, which are but the rudiments thereof, *fructus imperfectus et ordinabilis*, somewhat in order to it; and look as that is a critical and hazardous season to trees, so is this to souls. I do not say it is in the power of any soul to make the work of the Spirit effectual and abiding, by adding his endeavours to the Spirit's motions; for then conversion would not be the free and arbitrary act of the Spirit, as in Joh iii. 8. neither would souls be born of God, but of the will of man, contrary to John i. 13. And yet it is not to be thought or said, that mens endeavours and strivings are altogether vain, needless, and insignificant; because, though they cannot make God's grace effectual, his grace can make them effectual; they are our duty, and God can bless them to our great advantage. Now there are, among others, five remarkable essays, efforts, or strivings of a soul under the impression and hand of the Spirit, that greatly tend to the fixing, settling, and securing of that great work on the soul; and it is seldom known any soul miscarries in whom these things are found.

1. Deep, serious, and fixed consideration, which lets conviction deep into the soul, and settles it, and roots it fast in the heart, Psal. cxix. 59. "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet "unto thy testimonies." There are close and anxious debates in those souls in whom convictions prosper to full conversion: they sit alone, and think close to their great and eternal concerns: they carry their thoughts back to the evils of their life past, then smite on the thigh, and cry, *What have I done?* They run their thoughts forward into eternity, and that to a great depth, and then cry, "What shall I do to be saved?" They deliberate and weigh, in their most advised thoughts, what is to be done, and that speedily, for escaping wrath to come; thus they fix those tender, weak and hazardous motions, which die away in multitudes of souls; and, in the loss of them, the seasons of salvation are also lost.

2. The first stirrings and motions of the Spirit, upon mens hearts, do then become a season of salvation to them, when they are accompanied with spiritual, fervent, and frequent prayer: so it was with Paul, Acts ix. 11. "Behold he prayeth." It is a good sign when souls get alone, and effect privacy and retirement, to pour out their fears, sorrows, and requests unto God: It is in the espousals of a soul to Christ, as it is in other marriages; a third person may make the motion, and bring the parties together, but they only betwixt themselves must conclude and agree the matter. Prayer is the first breath which the new creature draws in, and the last (ordinarily) it breaths out in this world. This nourishes and maturates those weak, tender, and first motions after God, and brings them to some consistence and fixedness in the soul.

3. Then do those motions of the Spirit on mens hearts make a season of salvation to them, when they remain and settle in the heart, and are in them *per modum quietis*, by way of rest and abode, following the man from place to place, from day to day; so that whatever unpleasing diversions the necessities and incumbrances of this world at any time give, yet still they return again upon the heart, and will not vanish, or suffer any longer suspension: but in others, who lose their blessed advantage and season, it is quite contrary; James i. 23, 24. "They are as one that "seeth his natural face in a glass, and goeth away and forgetteth "what manner of man he was:" He sees some spot on his face, or disorder in his hand, which he purposeth to correct; but, by one occurrence or another, he forgets what he saw in the glass, and so goes all the day with his spot upon him. This was an evanid light purpose, which came to nothing for want of a

present execution; just so it is with many in reference to their great concerns: but if the impression abide in its strength, if it return, and follow the soul, and will not let it be quiet, it is like then to prosper, and prove the time of mercy indeed to such souls.

4. An anxious sollicitude, and inquisitiveness, about the means and ways of salvation, speaks an effectual door of salvation to be set open to the souls of men, Acts ii. 37. and xvi. 30. "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? Men and brethren, what "shall we do?" *q. d.* we are in a miserable condition; oh you the ministers of Christ, instruct, counsel, and shew us what course to take: Is there no balm in Gilead? no door of hope in this valley of Achor? Alas! we are not able to dwell with our own fears, terrors, and presages of wrath to come. Oh for a messenger, one among a thousand, to teach us the way of salvation. Thus the Lord rivets and fixes those motions in some souls, that vanish like a morning mist, or dew.

5. Lastly, That which secures and completes this work, is the execution of those purposes and convictions, by falling, without delay, to the work of faith and repentance in good earnest, dallying no more with so great a concern, standing no longer at *shall I? shall I?* when mean while time flies away, and opportunities may be lost: but bring their thoughts and debates to peremptory resolution, as the *Lepers* at Samaria did; and seeing themselves shut up to one only door of hope, there they resolve to take their station, lying at the feet of Jesus Christ, and casting their poor burdened souls upon him, whatever be the issue. When the Spirit of God ripens the first motions to this, and carries them through that critical season thus far, there is an effectual door of opportunity opened indeed; this is an acceptable time, a day of salvation: but oh! how many thousands miscarry in this season, and like trees removed from one soil to another, die in the removal!

But certainly, it is the most solemn and important concern of every soul to watch upon all these seasons of salvation, when God comes nigh to them by convictions and motions of his Spirit; and to put the same value upon these things that they do upon their souls, and the salvation of them. This is the door of hope set open, a fresh gale to carry you home to your port of glory. Salvation is now come nigh to your souls; there is but a little betwixt you and blessedness. Wise and happy is that soul which knows and improves its season. To persuade and press men to discern and improve such seasons as these, is the principal work of the preachers of the gospel,

and that special work to which I now address myself, in the following motives and arguments.

Arg. 1. And first, who, that hath the free exercise of reason, and the sense of a future eternal estate, would carelessly neglect any season of salvation, whilst he seeth all the rational world so carefully attending, and watching all opportunities to promote, and secure their lower concerns, and designs for the present life?

Is not the saving a man's soul as weighty a concern, as the getting of an estate? You cannot but observe how careful merchants are, to nick the opportunity which promiseth them a good turn; how do poor seamen look out for a wind, to waft them to their port, and industriously shift their sails, to improve every flaw that may set them on their voyage; how many miles tradesmen will travel to be in season at a fair, to put off, or purchase goods, to their advantage: No entertainments, recreations, or importunities of friends, can prevail with any of these, to lose a day, on which their business depends; all things must give way to their business; they all understand their seasons, and will not be diverted. But, alas! what childish toys are all these, compared with their salvation! what is the loss of a little money, to the loss of a man's soul? If a man's life depended upon his being at such a place, by such a precise hour, sure he would not over-sleep his time that morning; and had he but the least fear of coming too late, every stroke of the clock would strike to his heart; and yet remissness, and carelessness, in such a case as this, is infinitely more excusable, than in the matter of salvation. Certainly the sollicitude, and care of all the world for the interests thereof, yea, your own diligence, and circumspection in temporal things, will be an uncontroulable, and confounding self-conviction to you in the day of your account, and leave you without plea, or apology, for your supine neglects of the seasons of salvation.

Arg. 2. The consideration of the uncertainty, and slippery nature of these spiritual seasons, must awaken in us all care, and diligence to secure, and improve them: This nick of opportunity is *tempus labile*, a slippery season; it is but short in itself, and very uncertain: "To day, whilst it is said to day "(saith the apostle) if ye will hear his voice," Heb. iii. 15. *q. d.* You have now a short, uncertain, but most precious, and valuable season for your souls, lay hold on it, whilst it is called *to-day*: for, if this season be let slip, the time to come is called

by another name, that is, not *to-day*, but *to-morrow*. Your time is the *present time*; take heed of procrastinating and putting it off, till that which is called *to-day* (which is your *only season*) be past, and gone. The precious inch of time, though it be more worth than all the other greater parts, and portions of your time, yet it is as much *in fluxu*, in hasty motion, and spending, as other parts of time are; and being once lost, is never more to be recalled, or recovered. Few men know, or understand it, whilst it is current; other seasons for natural, or civil actions, are known, and stated, but the time of grace is not so easily discerned, and therefore commonly mistaken, and lost: And this comes to pass, partly through,

1. Presumptuous hopes.
2. Discouraging fears.

1. Presumptuous hopes, which put it too far forth, and persuade us this season is yet to come; that we have time before us, and that *to-morrow* shall be as *to-day*. "Thus through "presumption *, men hope, and by their presumptuous hopes "they perish." This is the ruin of most souls that perish.

2. Discouraging fears put it too far back, and represent it as long since past, and gone, whilst it is yet in being, and in our hands. By such pangs of desperation, Satan cuts the nerves of industry, and diligence, and causes souls to yield themselves as by consent, for lost, and hopeless, even whilst the gospel is opening their eyes, to see their sin and misery, which is a part of the work, in order to their recovery. Thus the eyes of thousands are dazzled, that they cannot discern the season of mercy, and so it slides from them, as if it had never been.

God came near them in the means of their conversion, yea, and nearer in the motions of his Spirit upon their consciences, and affections; but they knew not the time of their visitation, and now the things of their peace are hid from their eyes. Had those convictions been obeyed, and those purposes that were begotten in their hearts, been followed by answerable executions of them, happy had they been to all eternity: But their careless neglects have quenched them, and the door is shut; and who knows whether it may be opened any more? O dally not with the Spirit of God, resist not his calls! his motions on the soul are tender things; they may soon be quenched, and never recovered.

Arg. 3. Neglect not the seasons of mercy, the day of grace,

* *Praesumendo sperant, et sperando pereunt.*

becauſe opportunity facilitates the great work of your ſalvation; it is much eaſier to be done in ſuch a ſeaſon, than it can be afterwards: An impreſſion is eaſily made on wax, when melted, but ſtay till it be hardened, and if you lay the greateſt weight on the ſeal, it leaves no impreſſion upon it. Much ſo it is with the heart, there is a ſeaſon when God makes it ſoft, and yielding, when the affections are thawed, and melted under the word; conſcience is full of ſenſe, and activity, the will palpable: Now is the time to ſet in with the motions of the ſpirit; there is now a gale from heaven, if you will take it, and if not, it tarries not for man, nor waits for the ſons of men: Neglect of the ſeaſon, is the loſs of the ſoul. The heart, like melted wax, will naturally harden again, and then to how little purpoſe are your own feeble eſſays? Heb. iii. 15. 'Tis both eaſy and ſucceſsful ſtriving, when the Spirit of God ſtrives in you, and with you; you are now workers together with God, and ſuch work goes on ſmoothly, and ſweetly; that which is in motion is eaſily moved; but if once the heart is ſet, you may labour to little purpoſe.

Arg. 4. The infinite importance, and weight of ſalvation, is alone, inſtead of all motives, and arguments, to make men prize, and improve every proper ſeaſon for it. It is no ordinary concern, it is your life, yea, it is your eternal life; the ſolemnity, and awfulneſs of ſuch a buſineſs as this, is enough to ſwallow up the ſpirit of man. O what an awful ſound have ſuch words as theſe, ever with the Lord! Suppoſe you ſaw the glory of heaven, the full reward of all the labours, and ſufferings of the ſaints, the bleſſed harveſt of all their prayers, tears, diligence, and ſelf-denial in this world; or ſuppoſe you had a true repreſentation of the torments of hell, and could but hear the wailings of the damned, for the neglect of the ſeaſon of mercy, and their paſſionate, but vain wiſhes for one of thoſe days which they have loſt: Would you think any care, any pains, any ſelf-denial too much, to ſave, and redeem one of theſe opportunities? Surely had would have a far higher eſtimation of them, than ever you you in your lives.

A trial for a man's whole eſtate, is accounted a ſolemn buſineſs, among men; the caſt of a dye for a man's life, is a weighty action, and ſeldom done without anxiety of the mind, and trembling of the hand: Yet both theſe are but children's play compared with ſavation-work.

Three things put an unſpeakable ſolemnity upon this matter; it is the precious ſoul, which is above all valuation, that lies at

ſtake, and is to be ſaved, or loſt. The ſaving or loſing of it, is not for a time, but for ever; and this is the only ſeaſon in which it will be eternally ſaved or caſt away: All hangs upon a little inch of time, which being over-ſlipt, and loſt, is never more to be recalled, or recovered. *Lord! with what ſerious ſpirits, deep, and weighty conſideration, fears, and tremblings of heart, ſhould men and women, attend the ſeaſons of their ſalvation!*

Believe it, reader, ſince thy ſoul projected its firſt thought, there never was a more weighty, and concerning ſubject than this preſented to thy thoughts. O! therefore, let not thy thoughts trifle about it, and ſlide from it, as they uſe to do in other things of common concernment.

Arg. 5. If we ſet any valne on the true pleaſure of life, or ſolid comfort of our ſouls at death, let us by no means neglect the ſpecial ſeaſons, and opportunities of ſalvation we now enjoy.

Theſe two things, the pleaſure of life, and comforts in death, ſhould be prized, by every man more than his two eyes; certainly no being at all is more deſirable, than a being without theſe: Take away the true, ſpiritual pleaſure of life, and you level the life of man with the beaſt that periſheth; and take away the hope, and comfort of the ſoul in death, and you ſink him infinitely below the beaſts, and make him a being only capable of miſery for ever.

Now there can be no true, ſpiritual pleaſure, found in that ſoul that has neglected, and loſt his only ſeaſon of ſalvation: All the ſolid delight, and comfort of life, reſults from the ſettlement, and ſecurity of a man's great concern in the proper ſeaſon thereof. The true mirth of the *converted Prodigal* bears date from the time of his return, and *reconciliation to his father*, Luke xv. 24. Two things are abſolutely pre-requiſite to the comfort of life, *viz. a change of the ſtate by juſtification, and a change of the frame and temper of the heart, by ſanctification.* To be in a pardoned ſtate, is a matter of all joy, Mat. ix. 2. and "to be ſpiritually minded, is life and peace," Rom. viii. 6. No good news comes to any man, before this; and no bad news can ſink a man's heart, after this.

And for hope, and comfort in death, let none be found to expect it, till he has firſt complied with, and obeyed God's call in the time thereof: A careleſs life never did, nor never will produce a comfortable death. What is more common among all that die, not ſtupid, and ſenſeleſs, as well as unregenerate, and Chriſtleſs, than the bitter, dolorous complaints of their miſſpent time, and loſing their ſeaſons of mercy? *Reader, if thou wouldſt not feel that anguiſh thou haſt ſeen, and heard others to*

be in on this account, know the time of thy visitation, and finish thy great work, whilst it is day.

Arg. 6. Neglect no season of salvation which is graciously afforded you, because your time is short; death and eternity, are at the door. "You know that you must shortly put off these "tabernacles," 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. that when a few years are come, "you shall go the way whence you shall not return," Job xvi. 22. All the living are listed soldiers, and must conflict, hand to hand, with that dreadful enemy death, and there is no discharge in that war, Eccles. viii. 8. It will be in vain to say, You are not willing to die; for willing, or unwilling, away you must go, when death calls you. It will be as vain to say, You are not ready; for, ready, or unready, you must be gone, when death comes. Your readiness to die, would, indeed, be a cordial to your heart in death; but then, you must improve and ply the time of life, and husband your opportunities diligently; carelesness of life, and readiness for death are inconsistent, and exclusive of each other. The bed is sweeter to none than the hard labourer, and the grave comfortable to none but the laborious Christian. You know nothing can be done by you after death; the *compositum* is then dissolved; you cease to be what you were, to enjoy the means you had, and to work as you did. O therefore slip not the only season you have, both of attaining the end of life, and escaping the danger and hour of death.

The U S E.

I shall close all with a word of exhortation, persuading (if possible) the careless and unthinking neglecters of their precious time and souls, to awake out of that deep and dangerous security in which they ly fast asleep on the very brink of eternity, and "to-day, whilst it is yet called to-day," to hear God's voice calling them to repentance and faith, and thereby to Christ and everlasting blessedness. "Behold, he yet stands at the "door, and knocks," Rev. iii. 20. The door of hope is not yet finally shut, there are yet some stirrings at certain times in mens consciences; God comes near them in his word, and in some rouzing acts of providence, the death of a near relation, the seizure of a dangerous disease, the blasting and disappointment of a man's great design and project for this world, a fall into some notorious sin; these, and many such like methods of providence, as well as the convincing voice of the word, have the efficacy of an awakening voice to mens drowsy consciences; and if careless sinners would but attend to them, and follow home those motions they make upon their hearts, who knows to what these weak beginnings might arise and prosper?

The ſouls of men are, as it were, imbarked in the calls of God, your life is bound up in them; if theſe are loſt, your ſouls are loſt; if theſe abide upon you, and grow up to ſound converſion, you are ſaved by them. More particularly conſider,

1. What a mercy it is, to have your lot providentially caſt under the goſpel; to be born under, and bred up with the means and inſtruments of converſion and ſalvation. We have lived from our youth up, under the calls of God, and within the joyful ſound of the goſpel: "God hath not dealt ſo with other "nations," Pſal. cxlvii. 20. Though others ſhould ſeek the means of life, they cannot find them; and though you ſeek them not, you can hardly miſs them.

2. How great a mercy is it, to have your lives lengthened out hither to by God's patience, under the goſpel! that neither that golden lamp, nor the lamp of your life, (both which are liable to be extinguiſhed every moment) are yet put out. Thouſands and ten thouſands, your contemporaries, are gone out of the hearing of the voice of the goſpel, they ſhall never hear another call; the treaty of God is ended with them; the maſter of the houſe is riſen up, and the doors are ſhut. Your neglects and provocations have not been inferior to theirs; but the patience and goodneſs of God has exceeded and abounded to you beyond whatever it did to them.

3. Bethink yourſelves what an aggravation of your miſery it will be, to ſink into hell with the calls of God ſounding in your ears! to ſink into eternal miſery, betwixt the tender, out-ſtretched arms of mercy! this is the hell of hell, the emphaſis of damnation, the racking engine on which the conſciences of the damned are tortured. "And thou Capernaum, which art exalted to hea-"ven, ſhall be brought down to hell," Matth. xi. 23. Such a fall, after ſo high an exaltation, is the very ſtrappado which will torment your conſciences. Hell will prove a cooler and milder place to the Heathens that never enjoyed your light, means, and mercies in this world, than it will to you. None ſink ſo deep into miſery in the world to come, as they that fall from the faireſt opportunities of ſalvation in this world.

4. Let no man expect that God will hear his cries and intreaties in time of miſery, who neglects and ſlights the calls of God in time of mercy. God calls, but men will not hear; the day is coming, "when they ſhall cry, but God will not hear," Prov. i. 24, 25. "Will God hear his cry, when trouble cometh "upon him?" Job xxvii. 9. No, no; he will not: and this is but a juſt retribution from the righteous God, whoſe calls and counſels men have ſet at nought. But whatever men now think

of it, it is certainly the greatest misery incident to men in all the world: for as no words can make another fully sensible what a privilege it is to have the ear, favour, pity, and help of God in a day of straits; so it is impossible for any words to express the doleful state and case of that soul whom God casts off in trouble, and whose cries he shuts out.

5. Beware of neglecting any call of God, because that call you are now tempted to neglect, may be the last call that God ever intends to give your soul. Sure I am, there is a call which will be the last call of God to rebellious sinners, and after that no more calls, but an eternal deep silence; *his Spirit shall not always strive with man*; and the more motions and calls you have already slighted, the more probable it is that this may be the last voice of God in a way of mercy to thy soul: and what if, after this, God should seal up thy heart, and judicially harden it; make thy will utterly inflexible, and thine ears deaf, as he threatens, Isa. vi. 10. What an undone miserable man or woman art thou then! Oh! beware of provoking the sorest of all judgments, by persisting any longer in a course of rebellion against light and mercy.

6. Whilst your hearts put off and neglect the calls of God, you can by no means arrive to the evidence and assurance of your election; for your election is only secured to you by your effectual calling, 2 Pet. i. 10. There is no way for men to discern their names written in the book of life, but by reading the work of sanctification in their own hearts, Rom. x. 8. I desire no miraculous voice from heaven, no extraordinary signs, or unscriptural notices and informations in this matter: Lord, let me but find my heart complying with thy calls, my will obediently submitting to thy commands; sin my burden, and Christ my desire: I never crave a fairer or surer evidence of thy electing love to my soul: and if I had an oracle from heaven, an extraordinary messenger from the other world, to tell me thou lovest me, I have no reason to credit such a voice, whilst I find my heart wholly sensual, averse to God, and indisposed to all that is spiritual.

9. What reason have you why you should not presently embrace the call of God, and thankfully lay hold only on the first opportunity and season of salvation? Have you any greater matters in hand than the salvation of your precious souls? Is there any thing in this world that more concerns you? If the affairs of this life be so indispensably necessary, and those of the world to come so indifferent; if you think that meat and drink, trade and business, wife and children are such great things, and Christ,

the soul, and eternity, such little things; or if you think salvation to be a work of the greatest necessity, and yet may safely enough be put off to an uncertain time, I may assure you, you will not be long of this mind. How soon are all the mistakes of men in these matters rectified in a few moments after death! Rectified, I say, but not remedied; your opinion will be changed, but not your condition.

8. Do you not every day easily and readily obey the calls of Satan and your own lusts, whilst God and conscience are suffered to call and strive with you in vain? If Satan or your lusts call you to the tavern, to the world, and sinful pleasures, you speedily comply with their call, and yield a ready obedience; if pride or covetousness call, or passion and revenge call, they need not call twice; and shall God and conscience call only in vain? Lord, what a creature is man become! If a vain companion call, you have no power to deny him; if God call, you have no ear to hear him.

9. You cannot but observe the obedience and diligence of many others, how seriously, painfully, and assiduously they ply, and follow on the work of their own salvation, and yet are no more concerned in the events and consequences of these things than you are. Doth it not trouble you when you compare yourselves with them? Do not such thoughts as these sometimes arise in your hearts upon such observations? 'Lord, what a difference 'is there like to be betwixt their end and mine, when there is 'so apparent a difference in our course and conversation? Doth 'not God distinguish persons in this world by the frames of 'their hearts, and tenor of their lives, in order to the great 'distinction he will make betwixt one and another in the day 'of judgment? Have not I as precious a soul to save or lose 'as any of them? What is the matter that I sit with folded 'arms, whilst they are working out their salvation with fear and 'trembling? Why should any man or woman in the world be 'more careful for their souls, than I for mine? Surely its ca-'pacity and excellency is equal with theirs, though my care and 'diligence be so unequal.'

10. To conclude, God will shortly give you an irresistible call to the grave, and after that his voice shall call to you in your graves, *Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment:* But wo be to you, wo and alas that ever you were born, if you should hear the call of God to die, before you have heard and obeyed his call to Christ! Will your death-bed be easy to you? Can you with any hope or comfort shoot the gulph of eternity, before you have done one act for the security of your souls from the wrath to come?

It is a dreadful thing for a poor Chriſtleſs ſoul to ſit quivering upon the lips of a dying ſinner, not able to ſtay, nor yet endure a parting pull from the body, in ſuch a caſe as it is.

In a word; If that God that made, and will ſhortly judge you; if the Redeemer that ſhed his invaluable blood, and now offers you the purchaſes and benefits of it; if you have any love to, or care of your own ſouls, which are more worth than the whole world; if you have any value for heaven, or dread of hell, then, for God's ſake, for Chriſt's ſake, for your precious ſoul's ſake, trifle with heaven and hell no longer, but be in earneſt to *work out your own ſalvation with fear and trembling*. Could I think of any other means or motives to ſecure your ſouls from danger, I would ſurely uſe them: could I reach your hearts effectually, I would deeply impreſs this great concern upon them: But I can neither do God's part of the work, nor yours; it is ſome eaſe to me, I have in ſincerity, (though with much imperfection and feebleneſs) done part of my own: The Lord proſper it by the bleſſing of his Spirit in the hearts of them that read it. *Amen*.

The End of the third Volume.